



ESSEX
Safeguarding
Children
BOARD

ESSEX RISK IN THE COMMUNITY & MISSING ARRANGEMENTS

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1. Introduction

In Essex it is recognised that child exploitation cannot be dealt with by individual organisations working alone and that a multi-disciplinary or agency commitment is required to tackle and respond to child exploitation. This paper outlines the operational arrangements made by a wide range of partners across Essex for safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and young people from exploitation and those young people who regularly go missing from care, home and education. These arrangements equally consider the efforts required by a range of partners to detect and disrupt at the earliest possible stages and to fully support in the identification of those causing harm to others, and where possible, subsequent prosecutions. Close working between all agencies as well as ensuring parents as partners and working alongside vulnerable young people is crucial to building intelligence which can support in later prosecutions.

These arrangements are agreed as a means of complementing and strengthening current safeguarding processes and procedures and are to be used alongside the [Southend, Essex and Thurrock \(SET\) Child Protection Procedures](#) and the [Essex Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex](#) guidance.

Child exploitation is closely entwined with other forms of abuse such as emotional abuse, sexual abuse, physical abuse and neglect. Therefore, where there are concerns that a child or young person is being exploited or at high risk because of missing episode(s), then a request for support should be submitted to Essex County Council (ECC) Children and Families Hub in line with the Effective Support document, Social Care will respond as per the Effective Support document and SET Procedures

This paper is intended as guidance and reference for Missing and Child Exploitation (MACE) meeting Chairs, attending agencies and practitioners to ensure that there is clarity and consistency of the Essex arrangements.

The paper sets out the overall structure, introduces the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) Performance, Audit & Quality Assurance Sub-Committee which has the overarching strategic lead, and describes the terms of reference and purpose, governance arrangements, core membership and representatives, plus information sharing requirements to support all meetings and provide clarity over how information will be best utilised by differing bodies across Essex in tackling child exploitation.

Essex Safeguarding Children Board provides the overarching governance for the Risk in the Community approach in Essex. Bi-Annual reports are provided to the Performance, Audit and Quality Assurance sub-committee.

2. Definitions

The last revised definition for child sexual exploitation was launched in February 2017 alongside [a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation](#). This definition and guide replace the 2009 guidance 'Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation'.

The arrangements outlined within this document, use the 2017 revised definition for child sexual exploitation:

"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." (HM Government, 2017)

The Government's definition of Child Criminal Exploitation was introduced in 2018 through the Serious Violence Strategy published by the Home Office and is now incorporated into Working Together to Safeguard Children.

"Child Criminal Exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology." (Serious Violence Strategy, 2018)

[The statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care, 2014](#) set out expectations for Local Authorities, local safeguarding partners and multi-agency working in respect of children missing from home or care.

For the purposes of these Essex Child Exploitation & Missing arrangements, the definition of Missing assumes that outlined by Essex Police. Essex Police will not treat any persons under the age of 18 as ABSENT and must be treated as MISSING PERSONS only.

- *"Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another."*

The above definition is therefore applicable to children missing from home, care and education. Missing children cannot be treated as 'low' risk within Essex but will be assessed as medium or high risk.

- High Risk: *"a risk that is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the subject is in danger through their own vulnerability; or may have been the victim of a*

serious crime; or the risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger.”

- Medium Risk: *“the risk posed is likely to place the subject in danger or they are a threat to themselves or others.”*

3. Methods of Exploitation

Children and young people may experience exploitation in a variety of forms and contexts. Whilst these are sometimes described as 'models' of exploitation, in practice children often experience multiple forms of exploitation simultaneously, with harmers adapting their methods to target vulnerabilities and exert control.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) are forms of child abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate, control or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity for the benefit of the harmer or facilitator. Exploitation may occur in person, online, or through a combination of both.

Exploitation frequently overlaps with other safeguarding concerns and criminal offences, including:

- Child trafficking
- Modern slavery
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual violence and abuse
- Grooming, including online grooming
- Online child sexual abuse and image-based abuse
- Drug-related offending
- Serious youth violence
- County lines activity
- Gang-associated violence
- Immigration-related offences
- Forced labour and domestic servitude

Understanding how exploitation is affecting a child is essential in identifying risk, implementing effective disruption activity, and developing multi-agency plans that focus on the safety, wellbeing and recovery of the child and their family.

As local and national intelligence develops, methods of exploitation continue to evolve. The Essex Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) arrangements currently consider the following forms of exploitation.

3.1 Online Exploitation

Online exploitation occurs when digital technology is used to facilitate the exploitation of a child, this is a form of child abuse. Harmers may use social media platforms, online gaming, messaging applications, live-streaming services and other digital environments to groom, coerce, manipulate or control children.

Online exploitation may include:

- Grooming for sexual or criminal exploitation
- Coercion, threats or intimidation
- The sharing or production of indecent images of children
- Sexual extortion (sextortion)
- Live-streamed abuse

- Recruitment into criminal activity
- Financial exploitation

Children may be exploited entirely online, or abuse may progress to face-to-face contact. The use of technology does not reduce the level of harm experienced by the child.

3.2 Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse is abuse that occurs between children and young people and can happen both online and offline.

This can include:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence
- Emotional abuse
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Coercive and controlling behaviour
- Abuse within intimate or teenage relationships
- Harmful sexual behaviour

Children may also be groomed by their peers on behalf of adults or organised networks for the purposes of sexual or criminal exploitation. Whilst the behaviour may be carried out by another child, safeguarding responses should consider the wider contexts of exploitation, coercion and vulnerability.

3.3 Organised Crime Networks, Gangs and County Lines

Organised crime groups and gangs can exploit children through a range of criminal activities.

Organised Crime Group

An organised crime group is a network of individuals involved in serious criminality for financial or other gain. Such groups may be involved in drug supply, trafficking, money laundering, exploitation and violence.

Gang Association

A gang is generally characterised as a relatively durable group with a collective identity, where criminality and violence may form part of the group's culture or activities. Children associated with gangs may be at increased risk of exploitation, violence and harm.

Peer Associations

Not all groups of young people involved in risk-taking behaviour are gangs. Peer associations are usually informal groups of children and young people whose involvement in offending may be transient and not central to the group's identity. However, peers can play a significant role in facilitating exploitation.

County Lines

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation in which organised criminal networks use dedicated communication lines to facilitate the movement and supply of drugs across geographical areas.

Children and vulnerable adults may be groomed, coerced or forced to:

- Transport drugs, money or weapons
- Store drugs, money or weapons
- Collect drug debts
- Undertake criminal activity on behalf of others

Harmers frequently use intimidation, violence, debt bondage, threats and sexual violence to maintain control.

3.4 Trafficking and Modern Slavery

Child Trafficking

Child trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation.

Children may be trafficked:

- Within local communities
- Across the UK
- Across international borders

A child cannot consent to their own trafficking. Any movement of a child for the purpose of exploitation should be considered trafficking.

Modern Slavery

Modern slavery encompasses offences relating to slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking.

Children may be exploited through:

- Criminal activity
- Sexual exploitation
- Domestic servitude
- Forced labour
- Begging
- Cannabis cultivation
- Other forms of exploitation for financial gain

Children who are British nationals, foreign nationals, in care, or living with their families can all be victims of modern slavery.

National Referral Mechanism

A child subjected to trafficking should be referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) which is overseen by the Home Office. They will assess the information professionals provide and decide if the child meets the criteria as a victim of trafficking. Consent is not required to make this referral. Children should also be referred to the Independent Child Trafficking Guardian (ICTG) service alongside. This is a service run by Barnardo's to ensure a child receives a safeguarding response by their Local Authority. There is a local protocol agreed for the process of responding to child victims of trafficking (see SET Procedures). For victims over

18 years, consent must be sought for referral for an NRM, however regardless of consent professionals have a Duty to Notify (DTN) of trafficking activity to this can be understood by the Home Office.

3.5 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

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 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the child needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. Children may be sexually exploited even where the activity appears consensual, and exploitation may occur online, offline or through a combination of both.

Common contexts associated with CSE include:

Relationship-Based Exploitation

A child is groomed to believe they are in a genuine or loving relationship with an adult or older peer. The harmer then manipulates, coerces or pressures the child into sexual activity for their own benefit or that of others.

Organised and Networked Exploitation

Children are exploited by multiple harmers and may be moved between locations, groups or networks. Exploitation can involve multiple victims and may operate across local authority boundaries.

Abuse of a Position of Trust or Responsibility

A harmer uses their position of power, influence or authority to facilitate sexual exploitation. This may include individuals working or volunteering in positions of trust, community settings or social environments where they have access to children.

Online Sexual Exploitation

Technology may be used to facilitate grooming, sexual coercion, image-based abuse, live-streaming, sexual extortion or the distribution of indecent images.

3.6 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

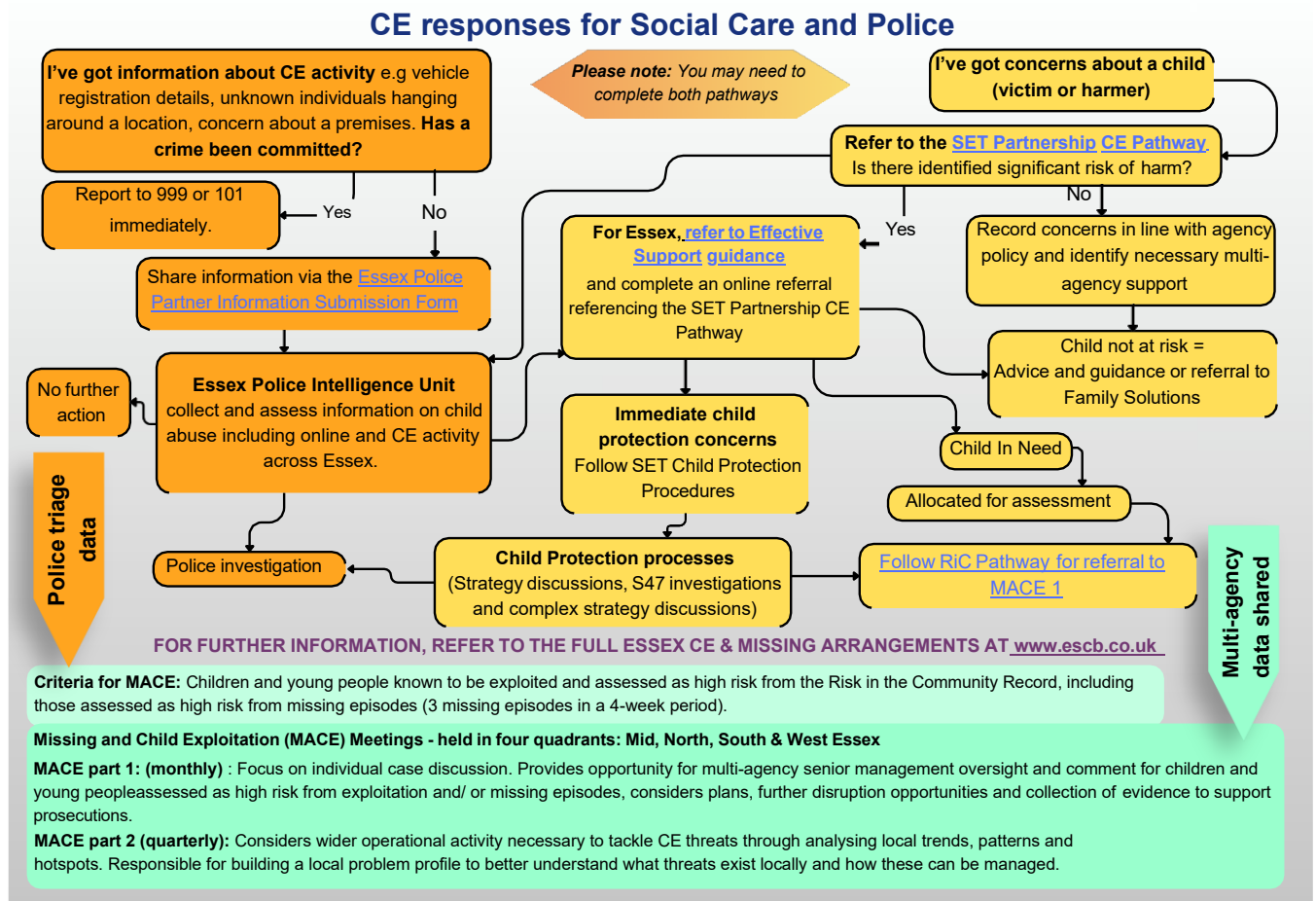
Child Criminal Exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity for the benefit of the perpetrator or facilitator. A child may be criminally exploited even where the activity appears consensual.

Child Criminal Exploitation can include county lines activity, carrying drugs or weapons, theft, robbery, fraud, cuckooing, violence, money laundering and other criminal acts undertaken on behalf of others.

3.7 Child Exploitation process

A full version of the flowchart, with active hyperlinks, is available at:

www.escb.co.uk/media/gcwllejgt/ce-responses-for-social-care-and-police-1.pdf . Please be aware that the flowchart displayed below is an image and any links shown within it are not clickable. This flowchart should be be read in conjunction with the SET Procedures.



4. Missing Children

The Children Act 2004 and DfE Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care 2014, requires local authorities to have plans in place that prevent children from going missing and to protect them when they do. Local authorities must ensure that all incidents where children go missing are appropriately risk assessed and record all incidents of looked after children who are away from placement without authorisation, missing or absent.

Children who go missing may be at greater risk of harm as a consequence of their basic need for food, safety and shelter and/or from the people with whom they may come into contact with. Risks can also include physical harm, self-harm by virtue of poor mental health, vulnerability to sexual or criminal exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, radicalisation, drugs and alcohol or involvement in a range of other criminal activities including gangs. Additional risk and vulnerability may also be present in relation to age, level of understanding or the significance and seriousness of the circumstances that led to the child going missing.

Essex 'Missing Chats' (previously known as Independent Return Interviews) are a standard response to all children who go missing in Essex. All children aged ten years and over returning from missing are offered a Missing Chat by Essex County Council Children and Families Missing Chat team. However all agencies can support this by checking with the child whether they have had, or if they would like, a missing chat. Missing Chats provide an opportunity to uncover information that can help protect a child from the risk of going missing again, from risks they may have been exposed to while missing or from risk factors in their environment. Missing Chats can be conducted by professionals who are independent of any statutory role. In Essex Missing Chats are a voluntary activity and children have the choice to accept or decline and therefore need to be given clear information in regard to how the Missing Chat could support them.

A multi-agency approach is required to reduce the risk of children going missing and to effectively manage the coordination of multi-agency responses, covering the following:

- Agencies must be alert and competent to identify and act upon concerns where a child has been missing.
- Share responsibility across all agencies to identify children and young people who are vulnerable and to oversee what plans are currently in place to manage the risk.
- Review safety plans to ensure that all agencies are responding appropriately to children and young people who are frequently running away from home or care.
- Provide the allocated worker with guidance and advice around responding to missing episodes included in the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) for missing and possible preventative measures that can be put in place.
- Effective use and analysis of data for missing children, analysis of ECC Children & Families missing prevention plans and Essex Missing Chats to better understand the needs of children who go missing.

- Ensure consistent and robust information sharing and utilisation of relevant and appropriate resources to provide support to children and their families, including Essex Missing Chat offers.
- All agencies participating in learning and development activities to develop a shared understanding about the roles and responsibilities to protect children from going missing and how to best support them to prevent further missing episodes.
- If a child is missing more than 5 days consecutively or has 3 missing episodes in a 28-day period, a strategy meeting is to be called. If a child is missing continues to go missing in a further 28-day period, a strategy meeting is to be held every 6 weeks.
- Referral to MACE 1 to be considered for all children with 3 missing episodes in a 28-day period. MACE referral to be discussed at the strategy meeting.

Essex Police provide notifications of all children who go missing in Essex to Essex County Council, Children & Families. The ECC Children & Families response includes a number of standard procedures including:

- Automatic triage of the circumstances where there have been 3 missing episodes in 90 days to assess increased vulnerability or risk of harm.
- Automatic triage where there is information contained within missing episode/s that indicates that the child may have suffered harm.
- ECC Children & Families, Involvement Service, will also offer every Essex Child a Missing Chat.

4.1 Missing Chats

A 'Missing Chat' is an opportunity for a child to talk freely about how they are feeling and the reasons they went missing and what help and support might be needed. It is an opportunity to explore the Push and pull factors by talking about what is going on for the child, what caused them to go missing on that occasion and may cause them to go again in the future. Exploring and understanding the Push and Pull factors around a child's missing episode, rather than just focusing on the Missing Episode itself is important in supporting the child to access appropriate support and professionals to create safety plans. To further support the inclusion of the valuable conversations had through Missing Chats in children and young people's plans, Push and Pull Factors are now identified as a part of the Missing Chat and included in the synopsis shared with police and social care. They are also included in a case note for those children with a social worker to make the information easily accessible and useful in decision making. Feedback from this change has been positive, particularly from Missing Persons Liaison Officers within the police.

Parental missing chats provide an opportunity for the parent to share their views and concerns when they can sometimes feel very isolated, blamed, and judged for their child's missing episodes. A parental missing chat can be an opportunity to provide information about other support services to help the parent feel more able to manage and understand the processes, but also to understand how to respond to their child, what signs to look for and what to report.

Providing a listening ear can also help them to build their relationship with social workers where relevant. For some parents knowing that someone is trying to support and listen to their child but has no role in decisions or their care is important. Parents are regularly referred to Barnardo's Parents Support Project, and PACE helpline.

4.2 Children in Care Who Go Missing (including children in care in Essex placed by other local authorities)

Children in Care report specific vulnerabilities in relation to missing episodes than the wider cohort of children who go missing. Evidence indicates factors such as placement location and/or stability and contact with family and friends can be present. Children who have care experience can be additionally vulnerable to all forms of exploitation. Children and young people in residential care and semi-independent accommodation are at greater risk ([APPG for Looked after Children and Care Leavers, 2012, RCH0019 - Evidence on Residential children's homes](#)).

There is a [Missing from Care Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU) Between Essex Police, Southend, Essex and Thurrock Childrens Social Care and Residential Care Home/16+ Supported Living Provider /Local Authority Foster Care Provider/Independent Foster Care Providers. The document sets out the expectations of care providers when a child goes missing from care within the Essex borders. All care providers are expected to sign up to the memorandum of understanding if they wish to operate within Essex.

One of the expectations of the memorandum of understanding is that a [Philomena Protocol Form](#) is completed for every child who is at risk of going missing. The Philomena Protocol Form asks for information to be inputted on the form which will support the Police in a missing investigation should the child go missing. It is the responsibility of the Social Worker in conjunction with the placement provider to complete the form at the placement planning meeting or as soon as possible. The Philomena Protocol Form is a live document and should be updated to reflect the current circumstances of the child at all times.

There is a responsibility for local authorities to hold missing and found information on children placed in their local authority by other local authorities. In Essex we actively monitor missing episodes for children who are looked after by other local authorities. We monitor for length of missing episode, any quality issues raised with placements, if there is an impact in the area of exploitation for the child placed in Essex by another local authority and for children linked to the placed child. If there are any issues we liaise with the placing local authority, we can also provide information, advice and attend meetings which the placing authority will hold.

4.3 Children Missing from Education

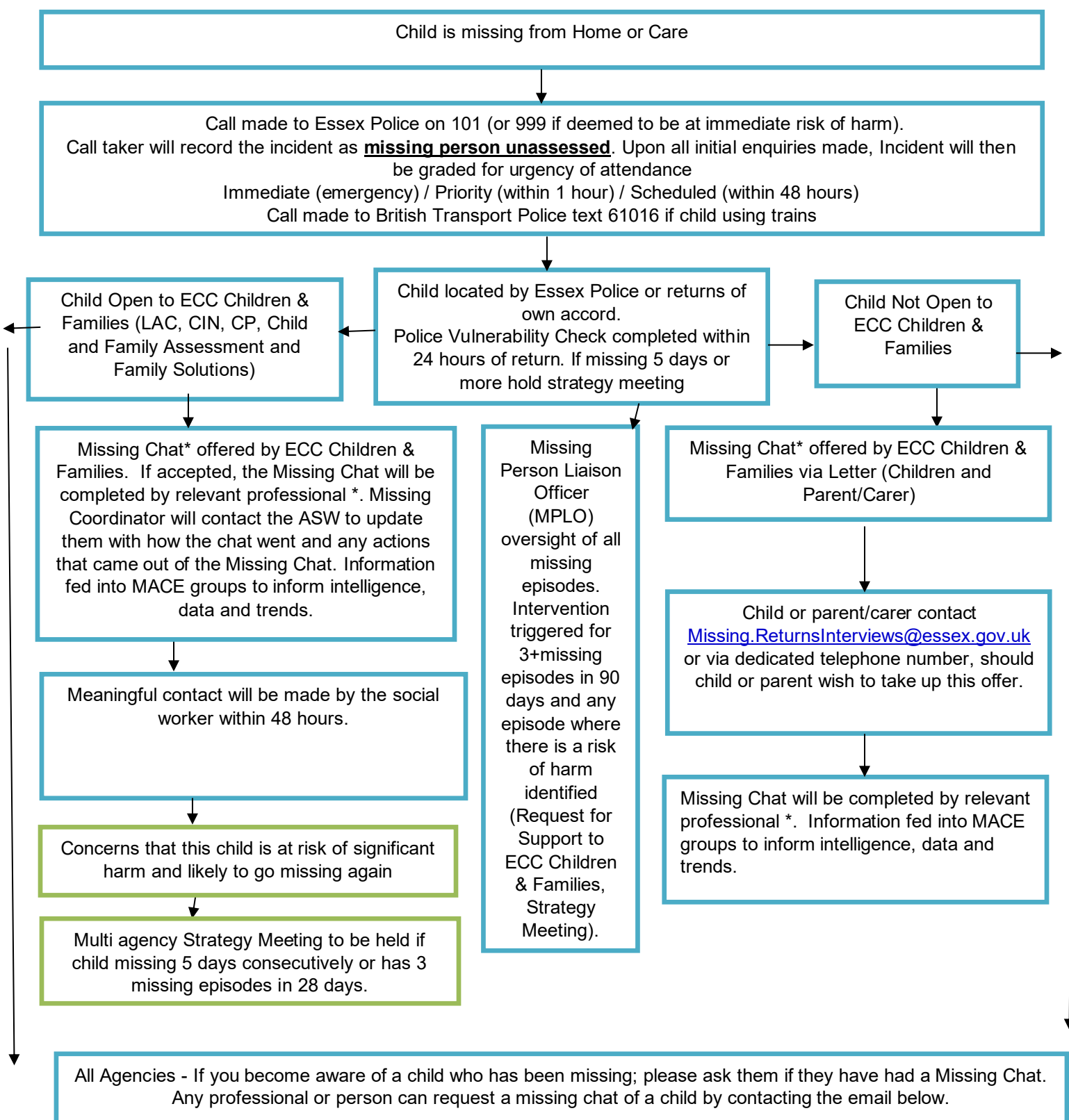
Children and young people on reduced timetables, exclusions and not on a school roll are particularly vulnerable to missing episodes. Not being in school can increase vulnerability, boredom, isolation from the usual circle of peers and can become a push for young people to escape the problems at school or a pull for young people to seek out other relationships or experiences that may not necessarily be safe.

For further information relating to Children Missing Education, reference should be made to the

4.4 Missing Person Liaison Officers (Essex Police)

Part of the responsibility of Missing Person Liaison Officers (MPLOs) is to maintain an overview of missing people within a defined area in order to identify those who are at risk of significant harm and to liaise between Essex Police and its partners, so as to reduce the likelihood of harm occurring to vulnerable people. (They work on intervention and prevention but do not deal with live investigations.) There are 10 MPLOs, one for each Essex Police District Policing Area.

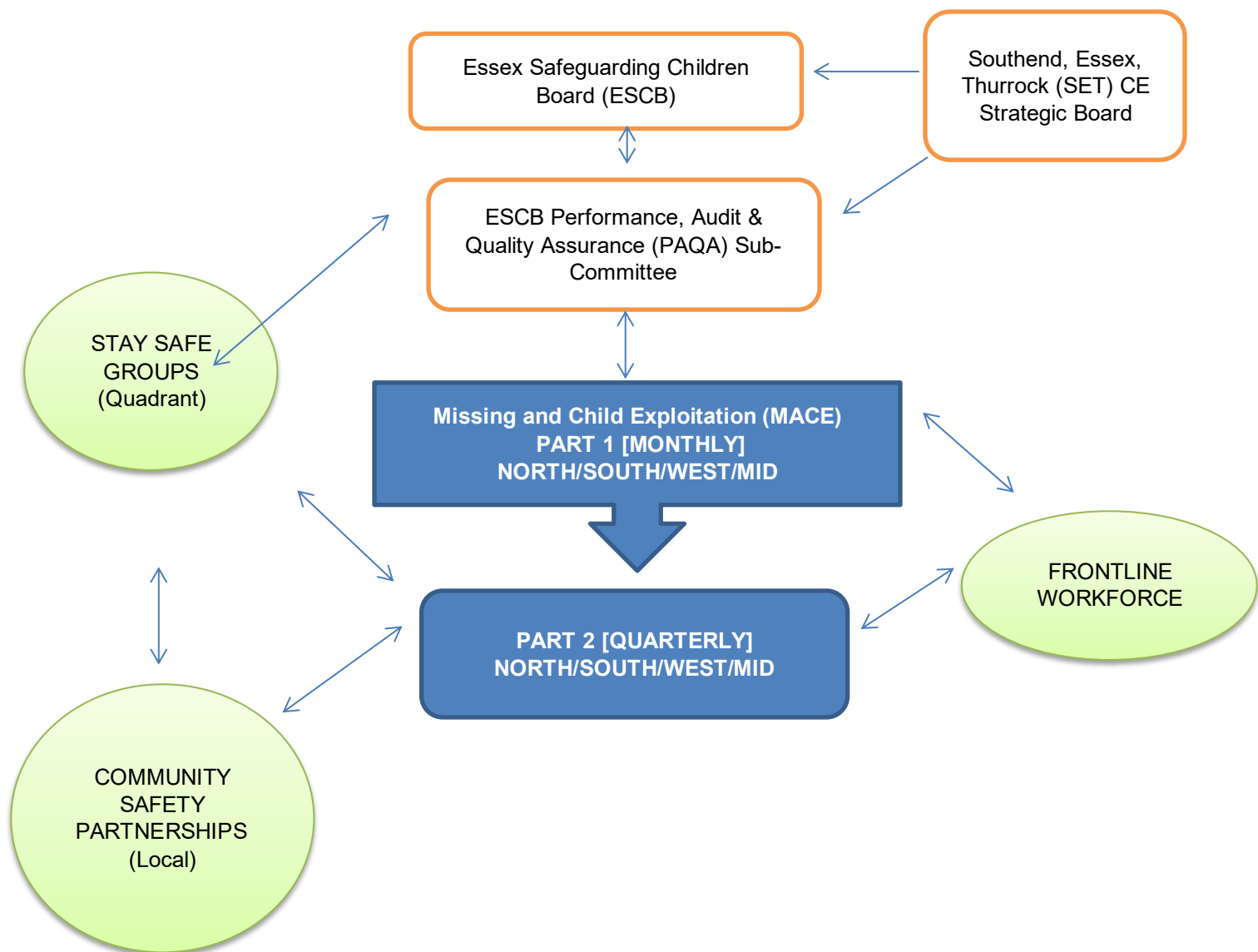
4.5 Missing Children Process



Missing Chats: Missing>ReturnsInterviews@essex.gov.uk

Relevant Professionals: Involvement Team, D-BIT Worker, Youth Offending Service Worker, Children's Society Worker, Missing Persons Liaison Officer or Children and Young Person's Police Officer

4.6 Essex Child Exploitation Overview



5. Governance arrangements for Risk in the Community

The Essex Safeguarding Children Board provides the governance for the Risk in the Community arrangements in Essex. Annual Risk in the Community reports are provided to the Board.

Bi-annual reports are provided to the ESCB Performance, Audit and Quality Assurance sub-committee on the activity and outcomes from MACE by the ECC Risk in the Community Team. Chairs from the MACE meetings are responsible for providing two reports a year to the Performance, Audit and Quality Assurance sub-committee. These reports are vital for ensuring that the MACE meetings are informed by local needs and priorities

The Risk in the Community Team also shares local Essex activity with the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Child Exploitation Strategic Board, which is responsible for coordinating any activities around child exploitation that sit across the three areas.

The ESCB Child Exploitation Manager attends quadrant MACE 2 meetings to provide expertise and oversight.

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6. MACE (Missing and Child Exploitation Meetings) 1 & 2

6.1 Terms of Reference

The MACE meeting is one meeting but in two parts, further details can be found on the [ESCB website](#) including One-Minute Guides:

MACE 1

MACE 1 meetings take place monthly across all four ECC Children & Families quadrants (Mid, North, South, and West). They are co-Chaired by ECC Children & Families and Essex Police.

The meetings provide oversight of young people's plans for known exploitation and those identified as vulnerable children to exploitation due to their missing episode(s) or other behaviours/incidents which identify them as at High Risk.

Young People discussed at the meeting are identified via the RIC Pathway, this requires a referral to Social Care and a Case Consultation with a Risk in the Community Senior Practitioner. The Risk in the Community Senior Practitioner will chair a Risk in the Community meeting to help the partnership to develop a plan which will be taken to MACE 1 for oversight.

Risk levels are available on the [ESCB website](#) and are aligned to the [SET CE Partnership Pathway](#) and [Essex Effective Support threshold document](#).

The Risk in the Community plan created at the Risk in the Community meeting, can be integrated into a child's statutory plan and partner plans for the young person. The Risk in the Community plan is reviewed every three months and taken back to MACE 1 again for oversight, this cycle continues until the risk reduces.

The aims of MACE 1 attendees are to:

- Ensure any additional disruptions, safeguarding responses or support is added to the plan where required.
- Be collectively responsible for the delivery and success of the MACE 1 plan.
- Provide suitable scrutiny and challenge of each other to ensure plans are implemented or changed when required.
- Be accountable to the Chairs for your organisation's response.
- Agree measures of success tailored to each young person.
- Agree escalation processes when plans are not reducing risk.

MACE 2

Co-Chaired between ECC Children & Families and Essex Police within each ECC quadrant. MACE 2 explores the current local picture of exploitation through analysing trends/patterns and identifying vulnerable locations (suspected exploitation occurring) and hotspots (known exploitation occurring). MACE 2 provides a district to countywide oversight of exploitation.

It is focused on:

- Establishing exact nature of concerns (e.g. methods of exploitation, victim & suspect profiles, specific trends)
- Safeguarding victims
- Identifying vulnerable populations and locations
- Working with Community Safety Partnerships to utilise governance and regulatory powers to investigate and disrupt exploitation
- Increasing community awareness for the prevention and reporting of exploitation
- Gathering information regarding links between suspected offenders and movements across areas and out of county
- Targeting venues/locations identified as hotspots or vulnerable locations
- Ensuring information is recorded, exchanged and disseminated appropriately
- Providing information to inform local problem profiles to develop action plans and impact measures

6.2 Impact measurement

Each representative is responsible for sharing at the meeting activity since last meeting and forward planned activity, plus any key trends/issues requiring discussion.

MACE Trackers provide a mechanism for MACE 1 Chairs to report on the impact that the multi-agency meeting is having on outcomes for children presented at MACE 1 meetings. The tracker provides aggregated data on the numbers of children discussed, type of education setting they attend, method of exploitation, place of exploitation, period of time open to MACE, outcome and/or reason for reduction in risk.

The Bi-Annual report provides trend data twice a year. The Chairs provide an update on the measures of success for the activity in MACE 2, alongside impact from the MACE 1 trackers, in their reports to the ESCB PAQA Sub-committee.

MACE 2 reviews key reports produced by partners focusing on the experiences and views of children and families affected by exploitation and/or missing. This includes information on missing young people from Independent Return Interviews (Missing Chats) plus consultations on community safety. Trend analysis from these reports based on the voice of children, families and our communities, is also considered alongside the Bi-Annual reports to support forward planning of partnership activities.

MACE Chair reports to the sub-committee should also include:

- Disruption activities
- Prevention activities
- Identified gaps in service provision
- Areas of vulnerability/risk for strategic consideration
- Measures of success

The ESCB partners have oversight of missing children in adherence with responsibilities set out in paragraphs 48-49 of the [Statutory guidance on children who run away and go](#)

[missing from home and care \(DfE, 2014\)](#); and 3.17 of [Safeguarding Young People from Child Sexual Exploitation \(DCSF, 2009\)](#). This includes the following:

- The number of children and young people missing and how many episodes.
- Times and durations children are missing
- Where children run away from
- Where children are located
- Information from Independent Return Interviews
- Absence data from schools
- The prevalence of child sexual exploitation
- Any other data that will enable the group to identify local 'hotspots' of activity
- The response and outcomes for children.

6.3 Membership & Representation

MACE 1: Core Membership	
Co-Chairs: Service Manager, Children & Families (C&F) & CYP Inspector	
Agency:	Designation:
Children & Families	Team Manager (for child's allocated team)
Children & Families	Risk in the Community Senior Practitioner
Children & Families	Missing Coordinator
Essex Police	CYP Officers Sergeant
Essex Youth Justice Service	Team Manager
Education Access Team	Education Access Specialist
Integrated Sexual Health Team	Clinical Lead
Youth Service	Youth Service Lead
The Children's Society	CARE Together Practitioner
Essex Child & Family Wellbeing Service	CIC Specialist Safeguarding Nurse
SET CAMHS	Team Manager
Borough, City & District Councils	Safeguarding Lead/CSP Lead
National Probation Service	Senior Probation Officer
MACE 1: If child known to service only	
Family Solutions	Practice Supervisor

Involvement Team	Senior Coordinator for Specialist Involvement
Essex Police	CSE Proactive Investigations Team DS
Essex Police	PPP Team DS
MACE 1: From child's 17th birthday	
Adult Social Care	Designated Service Manger

MACE 2: Core Membership	
Co-Chairs: Director of Local Delivery, Children & Families and Chief CYP Inspector	
Agency:	Designation:
ECC, Children & Families	Service Manager, MACE 1 Co-Chair
ECC, Children & Families	Partnership Lead for Delivery
Essex Police	CYP Officers Inspector
Essex Police	Op Raptor DI
Essex Police	CSE Proactive Investigations Team DI
Essex Police	PPP Team Sergeant
ECC, Adult Social Care	Team Manager
Essex Youth Justice Service	Team Manager
Essex Youth Service	Senior Youth and Community Commissioner
Family Solutions	Team Manager
ESCB/Involvements Team	Child Exploitation Manager
British Transport Police	Public Protection & Vulnerability Unit
ECC, Education	Education Safeguarding Adviser
ECC, Education	Education Access Specialist
Health ICB	Designated Nurse
Sexual Health	Team Manager

Essex Child & Family Wellbeing Service	Manager for Safeguarding & LAC
Community Safety Partnerships	Community Safety Managers / Safeguarding Lead (each district)
Probation Service	Team Manager
The Children's Society	CARE Together Team Manager
Part 1: By Formal Invite Only	
ECC, Intelligence & Insight Team	Performance Officer

Each member will have the appropriate skill base/managerial responsibility required to effectively execute activity agreed by the group. Members will fully contribute by bringing expertise and updates from their agency. Members should use the agenda items circulated in advance to fully prepare for their contributions prior to the meeting; this may involve arranging formal methods of communication within their agency to ensure they are briefed appropriately and have relevant information to share and cascade post the meeting. Members will ensure appropriate cover via representation should they be unable to attend; this representative must be fully briefed and able to actively contribute and update as required.

6.4 Borough, City & District Council's Role

Borough, City & District Councils are responsible for delivering a range of statutory services and discharging regulatory functions and their involvement with MACE Part 1 and MACE Part 2 will enable intelligence to be considered on a range of functions including:

- Housing
- Anti-Social Behaviour and Nuisance
- Licensing
- Revenues and Benefits
- Council Tax
- Animal Control and Welfare

Involving local Council's as core members of MACE enhances the forums' ability to consider multiple pieces of intelligence, enabling a more robust risk assessment to be undertaken of the young person, family and known associates. Inclusion will provide local authorities with an oversight of local cases and enable them to identify and determine what 'high risk' looks like locally.

Officer(s) attending are required to be of sufficient seniority within the Council to make decisions and commit resources on its behalf.

Sharing of information and intelligence will increasingly support the identification of possible harmers and vulnerable locations; for example, if harmers hold local authority tenancies there is potential for enforcement action against this tenancy.

Their governance and regulatory powers through housing, licensing, environmental health, fire and fraud, allow for a suite of powers and tools to enter premises to investigate possible exploitation. Gaining further information this way can provide intelligence and supplement information from victims and families.

Local authority designated safeguarding leads also attend Stay Safe Groups.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 made provisions for the establishment of Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) in each local authority area, providing statutory responsibilities to develop and produce crime and disorder reduction strategies. Responsible authorities of each CSP are:

- Borough, City or District Council
- Essex Police
- Integrated Care Board
- Essex Fire and Rescue Service
- The Probation Service

Other members vary dependent on each Community Safety Partnership, but generally there will be links to Victim Support, Synergy (SERICC , CARA and Southend on sea rape crisis) Women's Aid, Compass (partnership of domestic abuse services providing a response in Essex) Safer Places, The Children's Society, Substance misuse agencies such as Open Road, Phoenix Futures, Essex Young People's Drug & Alcohol Service and Housing Providers. Young people who have been sexually exploited and are involved in a police investigation against the harmer will be referred for an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) by the Police who offers them support through the proceedings and further counselling. Young people who are suspected victims but have not disclosed their experiences can be supported by The Children's Society who can liaise with police and prepare the young person for any Achieving Best Evidence interview, as well as further therapeutic support.

Attendance to MACE Part 2 allows for the development of medium and long-term strategies to reduce the risk and likelihood of exploitation, alignment of resources to target vulnerable locations and places of interest identified on local problem profiles. Local problem profiles shared within MACE Part 2 will be shared during CSP Tasking meetings or similar means within the local partnerships for the purposes of targeting resources specifically on local needs and developing local responses. In turn these responses will be updated to the MACE Part 2 meeting to ensure duplication is minimised and targeted work is understood by the wider membership.

There is the potential within CSPs to access various funding streams enabling the development and delivery of bespoke awareness raising activities, early intervention and prevention, training for local schools, residents, practitioners and parents.

6.5 Lead for Partnership Delivery Role

This role has oversight into local partnership arrangements and can effectively link county and local strategic plans to activity and the delivery of services on the ground. Their attendance provides the wider partnership perspective, and they attend Stay Safe Groups which provides oversight of emerging issues in a range of safeguarding areas and they support MACE 2 through their attendance and ability to help identify gaps in service delivery across the quadrant.

6.6 Additional Support, Agenda & Frequency

MACE 1 meetings occur monthly across all four quadrants.

MACE 2 meetings occur quarterly across all four quadrants.

MACE meetings are supported by a MACE Coordinator from the Involvement Service Children & Families. MACE business standards set out the requirements and responsibilities of this role, updated annually.

For the purposes of building problem profiles, MACE meetings are supported by a Bi-Annual report produced by the ECC Insight & Intelligence Team with contributions from Essex Police, ECC Education and Essex Youth Offending Service. This report is shared with MACE 2 and the SET CE Strategic Board. A hotspot tracker is updated at each MACE 2 meeting with new hotspots/vulnerable locations nominated by attendees, plus updates on plans to tackle existing hotspots/vulnerable locations.

Agenda for MACE Part 1 is the responsibility of the Chairs, supported by; Children & Families Risk in the Community Practitioners and the Missing Coordinator. The agenda is circulated one month prior to the meeting to ensure that members have sufficient time to prepare, through gathering relevant information as required. Core members are to ensure that any relevant information in respect of children, young people and locations being discussed is shared within the meeting.

There is a standardised agenda for MACE Part 2 (see *Appendix*) and additional items for discussion can be requested by the Chairs, it is circulated two weeks prior to the meeting to ensure that members have sufficient time to prepare for the meeting through gathering relevant information as required. Members are asked to provide an update on their actions/hotspots one month prior to the meeting so this can be added to the embedded documents in the agenda.

6.7 Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs)

Community Safety Partnerships are local partnerships made up of responsible authorities (police, local authorities, fire and rescue, health partners, probation service), elected members and voluntary sector organisations. In the Essex County Council area there are twelve local CSPs who each have responsibility to formulate a strategy to reduce crime and disorder, combat substance misuse and reduce re-offending, taking into consideration local, county and national priorities.

CSPs have a range of statutory responsibilities which include to:

- Consult and engage with the local community on issues of concern in relation to community safety
- Undertake an annual strategic assessment of crime and disorder data to identify local priorities
- Prepare plans to identify how national, county and local priorities can be addressed
- Reduce re-offending

- Conduct Domestic abuse related death reviews in the event of a domestic homicide occurring in their local area

CSPs will make their own arrangements to best support their local picture and functions of MACE, some areas have chosen to convene local 'Child Exploitation Working Groups' which will be represented by local members only who are in a position to support and drive local work. Whatever arrangements are made locally are clearly acknowledged and represented within MACE groups so that localised responses are understood by the quadrant MACE members.

6.8 Information Sharing & Confidentiality

The arrangements outlined within this document operate under the Pan Essex Overarching Safeguarding Information Sharing Protocol (Safeguarding ISP), which provides the framework for the lawful sharing of information to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. The Safeguarding ISP includes provisions relating to child exploitation and sets out the basis for sharing information concerning potential threats, low-level intelligence and concerns relating to child exploitation across the boundaries of Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea City Council and Thurrock Council. All partner agencies participating in MACE are expected to comply with the requirements of the Overarching Safeguarding ISP and any relevant organisational policies, procedures and statutory obligations relating to information sharing and safeguarding.

All information discussed is considered strictly confidential and must not be disclosed to third parties unless authorised by the Chair(s). All documents circulated in connection with MACE are classified as Official-Sensitive and must not be disclosed to third parties without the agreement of the Chair(s). The receiving agency is responsible for ensuring that all documentation is retained securely and in accordance with its records management and retention policies. Any disclosure of information outside of the MACE process without prior authorisation from the Chair(s) may constitute a breach of confidentiality and a breach of the information-sharing arrangements between participating agencies. An Information Sharing Statement (see Appendix) is available to members attending MACE meetings and is included within each meeting agenda.

7. Professional Disagreements

If an agency does not agree with a decision or recommendation made at a MACE, their different view will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and in the first instance disagreements should attempt to be resolved by the Chair. The Chair should ensure that rationale on decision making is clear and communicated to partners.

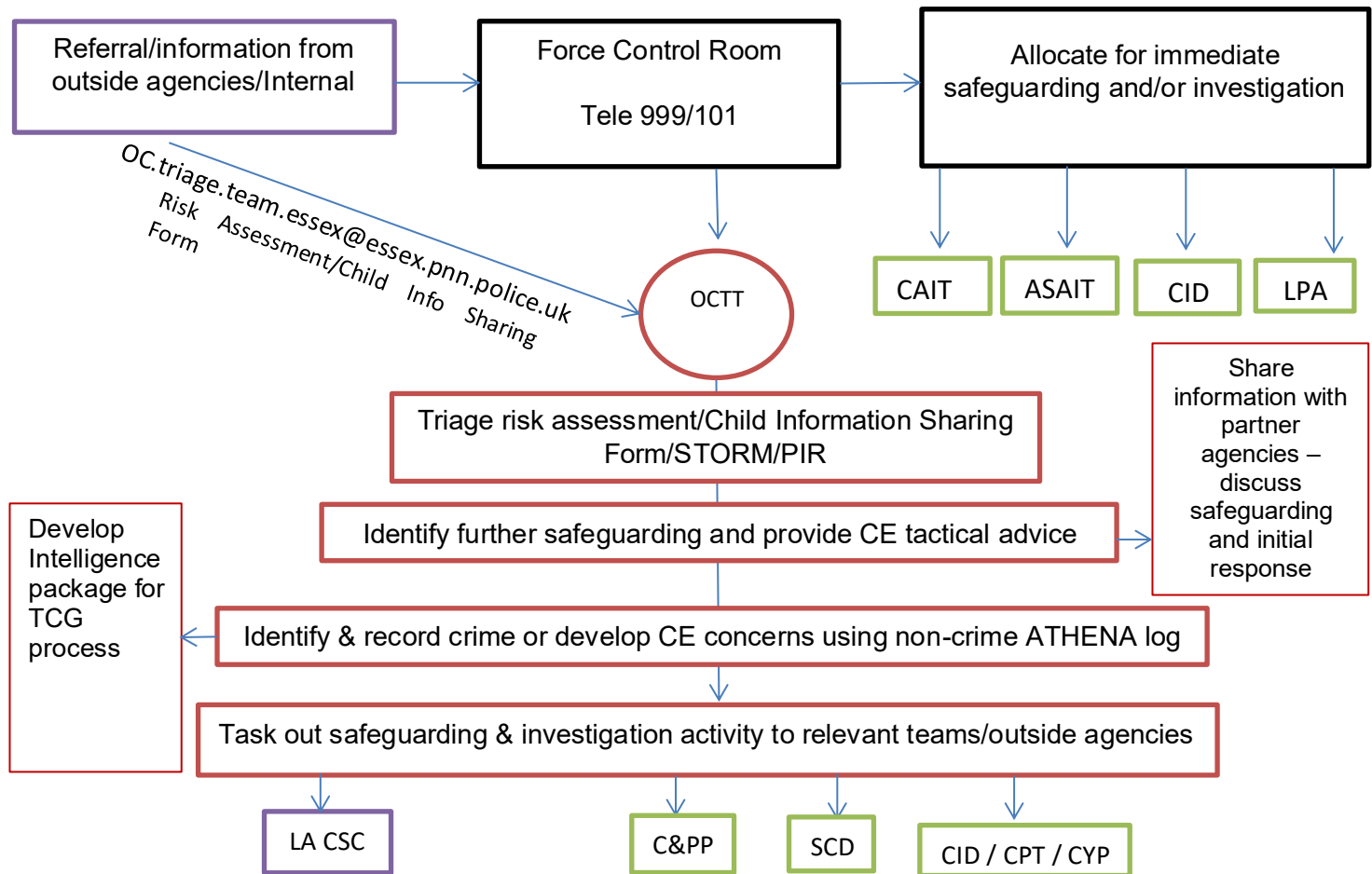
In respect of proposed cases for discussion where agencies outside of the lead agency are requesting that a child or young person be placed on an agenda for discussion, this should be discussed with the relevant ECC Children & Families Team Manager, any disagreements can be escalated to the Service Manager.

Should there be continued concerns or disagreements then the agencies own escalation process for professional disagreements should be implemented. Guidance on 'Resolving Professional Disagreements' may be found within the SET Child Protection Procedures.

8. APPENDIX

1	Essex Police Operational Centre Triage Team Business Processes Overview
2	Principal Contact List
3	Information Sharing Statement
4	MACE 2: Meeting Agenda

OC Triage Team (OCTT) Business Processes - Overview



The business processes provide a robust gatekeeping service which ensures risk assessments, intelligence and referrals received, direct from partner agencies or internally, are correctly recorded and routed to the most appropriate department within Essex Police.

Information submissions into OCTT are acceptable in only the following formats:

1. If it is a Child Protection Referral, then the referrer (referring agency) must use the established Child Protection pathway (i.e. refer to the Social Care Children & Families Hub and to the Essex Police CAIT & OCTT). A Child Protection referral would be required where there is concern that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.
2. If referral has an urgent safeguarding requirement or it is believed criminal offences have been disclosed, then the referral route is through the Essex Police Force Control Room. The Storm Command and Control process will be used to allocate the referral for progression by the appropriate team. OCTT will be made aware of the referral through a tag to the Storm incident record.

3. All other forms of information can be submitted to OCTT through use of dedicated OCTT email address: OC.triage.team.essex@essex.pnn.police.uk.

Where information is non-evidential, or offences have not been disclosed but there are potential interventions available, or the meaning / value of information is not yet understood, OCTT will create a record for each child at risk of exploitation and log any activity. These enquiries will be recorded on a non-crime Athena investigation log. All identified or suspected criminal offences will be recorded on Athena as a crime record.

PRINCIPAL CONTACT LIST

Details of all MACE Meeting dates, times and locations are held on the following [link](#)

		MACE 1	MACE 2
Mid (Chelmsford, Braintree, Maldon)			
ECC Children and Families Co-Chair:	Name: Role: Email:	Kirsten Lowe FS&P Service Manager kirsten.lowe@essex.gov.uk	Name: Role: Email: Gaye Cole Director for Local Delivery gaye.cole@essex.gov.uk
Essex Police Co-Chair:	Name: Role: Email:	Steven Parry CYP Inspector steven.parry@essex.police.uk	Name: Role: Email: Tina Cooper CYP Chief Inspector tina.cooper2@essex.police.uk
North (Colchester, Tendring)			
ECC Children and Families Co-Chair:	Name: Role: Email:	Janine Dawson FS&P Service Manager janine.dawson@essex.gov.uk	Name: Role: Email: Alison Baker Director for Local Delivery alison.baker@essex.gov.uk
Essex Police Co-Chair:	Name: Role: Email:	Steven Parry CYP Inspector steven.parry@essex.police.uk	Name: Role: Email: Tina Cooper CYP Chief Inspector tina.cooper2@essex.police.uk
South (Basildon, Castle Point, Rochford)			
ECC Children and Families Co-Chair:	Name: Role: Email:	Rachel Fairall FS&P Service Manager rachel.fairall@essex.gov.uk	Name: Role: Email: Michelle Hayden-Pepper Director for Local Delivery michelle.hayden-pepper@essex.gov.uk
Essex Police Co-Chair:	Name: Role: Email:	Steven Parry CYP Inspector steven.parry@essex.police.uk	Name: Role: Email: Tina Cooper CYP Chief Inspector tina.cooper2@essex.police.uk
West (Harlow, Brentwood, Uttlesford, Epping Forest)			
ECC Children and Families Co-Chair:	Name: Role: Email:	Mandy Abel FS&P Service Manager mandy.abel@essex.gov.uk	Name: Role: Email: Tina McElligott Director for Local Delivery tina.mcelligott@essex.gov.uk
Essex Police Co-Chair:	Name: Role: Email:	Steven Parry CYP Inspector steven.parry@essex.police.uk	Name: Role: Email: Tina Cooper CYP Chief Inspector tina.cooper2@essex.police.uk
Business Support			
Business Support:	Secure Email:	mace1.information@essex.gov.uk Please use this email address to submit documents of a sensitive nature	Secure Email: mace2.information@essex.gov.uk Please use this email address to submit documents of a sensitive nature

Missing & Child Exploitation (MACE) Meetings

INFORMATION SHARING STATEMENT

- Any agency in attendance or in receipt of information for the purposes of this meeting will have signed the *Essex Information Sharing Protocol for Safeguarding* which is owned by the Whole Essex Information Sharing Framework (WEISF), a copy of this protocol may be accessed via <http://weisf.essex.gov.uk>. The Information Sharing Protocol includes the Pan Essex [Child Exploitation Standard Operating Procedure](#) which outlines the sharing of any information relevant to safeguarding as allowed by legislation and refers specifically to data required for Missing and Child Exploitation (MACE) groups and Child Sexual Exploitation Triage Team (CSETT) meetings.
- The *SET Procedures 2026* sets out the legal principles and obligations of all partner agencies in relation to information sharing, which includes reference to the statutory guidance on s10 of the *Children Act 2004* making it clear that effective information sharing supports the duty to co-operate to improve the well-being of children. This includes the expectation that all practitioners comply with HM Government guidance on information sharing.

PREPARATION REQUIRED BEFORE THE MEETINGS:

- All Core members are identified as the single point of contact for their respective agency.
- All Core and Invited members are responsible for collating and sharing any relevant information known to their agency on the templates provided, as applicable, or through verbal updates within the meeting.
- All Core and Invited members are responsible for progressing, and updating the group with any information pertaining to actions tasked to them at previous meetings.
- Templates must be completed ahead of the meeting and sent to the Chair via secure means at least 48 hours before the meeting.
- If a Core or Invited member is unable to attend a meeting, then apologies must be provided to the Chair and details of alternative representative attending in their absence.
- Information for MACE 1 to be sent to; MACE1.information@essex.gov.uk
- Information for MACE 2 to be sent to; MACE2.information@essex.gov.uk

DURING THE MEETING, all members/representatives attending this meeting agree that:

- All documentation provided will be marked **Official Sensitive**.
- The minutes and documents of this meeting should not be photocopied or the contents shared outside of the meeting without the agreement of the Chair. Minutes should be kept in the Official Sensitive, RESTRICTED or CONFIDENTIAL section of agency files.
- If further disclosure within your organisation is identified as essential, permission should be sought from the Chair. Their decision on what information can be shared will be founded on considerations of necessity and proportionality.
- All information discussed is considered to be confidential and must not be disclosed to third parties unless authorised by the Chair.

PURPOSE

MACE 1: To provide senior management oversight and support to children and young people known to be being exploited and/or meeting threshold for high risk missing in each ECC quadrant. To ensure all information between agencies is reviewed and further support or disruptions considered and prosecutions pursued where possible.

MACE 2: To consider operational and tactical activity necessary to tackle child exploitation threats throughout the quadrant. To consider aggregated data from across a range of agencies, including Essex Police and Children & Families in respect of (but not exclusively) indicators of child exploitation, scope and form of child exploitation activity, missing episodes and information regarding missing, vulnerable populations and locations. It will support the targeting of hot spots, trends and patterns associated with child exploitation.

Updated June 2022

MACE Part 2 – [Insert] Quadrant Meeting Agenda

Date/Time:

Venue:

[Add link showing direction to venue]

Information Sharing Statement

MACE 2 One-Minute Guide

No.:	Item	Responsible Officer
1 Add time	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies: (5 mins)	Chair
2	Minutes of Last Meeting/Matters Arising: (5 mins) Previous approved minutes	Chair
3	Review Action Log: (10 mins) [Action log]	Chair
4	Review Action Plan (15 mins) Action Plan <i>NB: Please bring impact data required from your organisation and updates on your actions</i>	Chair All
5	Community & Neighbourhood: locations - <i>Vulnerable locations (suspected CE occurring)</i> - <i>Hotspots (known CE occurring),</i> - <i>T&F Updates (persistent and complex hotspots)</i> - <i>MACE 1 locations</i> (20 mins) [Hotspot Tracker]	MACE 1 Chairs Essex Police local Inspectors, CSPs & Youth Service All

6	Community & Neighbourhood: trends and disruptions - <i>Emerging trends</i> - <i>Disruption orders</i> - <i>Prevention activities</i> - <i>T&F groups</i> (20 mins)	Essex Police – OC Triage, CSE Proactive Team All T&F leads
7	Education: - <i>Overview of emerging trends</i> - <i>Prevention work</i> - <i>Safeguarding responses</i> (10 mins)	Education leads
8	Health: - <i>Overview of trends in A&E</i> - <i>Affinity Programme data</i> - <i>Exploitation themes from school nurses, sexual health services, and EWMHS</i> (10 mins)	CCG reps ECFWS reps
9	Guest Speaker Guest presentation (20 mins)	Guest
10	AOB, Forward Plan and Date of Next Meeting: <i>Key speakers and areas for further exploration and discussion</i> (5 mins)	All