

Policy name:	
Safeguarding Children Policy	
Section:	All sections
Exec responsible:	Director of Housing
Review by:	Director of Housing, Housing & Customer Engagement Manager (Safeguarding Lead)
Tenant review:	No
Authority to amend:	Chief Executive
Frequency of review:	Every 3 years
Last review:	November 2025
Next review:	November 2028
Responsibility for delivery:	All frontline staff
Strategy:	Housing Management Strategy
Associated risk ID:	8. Inadequate and ineffective customer service and/or engagement. 9. Health and safety failure or neglect.
Health & safety:	This policy outlines how we will safeguard children and support staff that witness, report or are otherwise involved in safeguarding matters. Staff personal safety is also safeguarded through the appropriate undertaking of this policy in conjunction with the Code of Conduct.
Equality & diversity:	Tenants and victims will be treated as individuals and with fairness and respect, reflecting our Equality and Diversity Policy.
Associated costs and value for money:	This policy ensures we provide a robust service
Associated documents:	

VERSION CONTROL			
Version Number	Sections Amended	Date of update	Approved by
1.0	First issue in new template	January 2016	Housing Manager
2.0	Full review (previously combined with adults)	March 2019	Executive Team
3.0	Periodic review as required	June 2022	Chief Executive
4.0	Full review	October 2025	Executive Team

CONTENTS

1. Objective
2. Definitions
3. Prevention and protection
4. Capacity
5. Supporting victims
6. Staff training and conduct
7. Information sharing and data protection
8. Recording and monitoring
9. Appendix 1 - Types and indicators of abuse

1. OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of this policy is to highlight our safeguarding responsibilities and our approach to preventing harm to children. This includes how we will identify children at risk of harm and how we will respond when they are experiencing, or are at risk from, abuse or neglect.

This policy has been developed with due regard to current legislation, statutory guidance and other good practice guidance.

2. DEFINITIONS

Definition of a child

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday as defined under the Children Act 1989.

The fact that a child has become sixteen years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is in the armed forces, in hospital, or in prison or a young offender's institution, does not change their status or their entitlement to services or their protection under the Children Act 1989.

Definition of abuse

When child abuse occurs, it is commonly within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a child regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

There are four main types of child abuse:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse

- neglect

The abuser may be a family member, or they may be someone the child encounters in a residential setting or in the community, including during sports and leisure activities. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming that child.

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. More detail on the types and indicators of abuse can be found at Appendix 1.

3. PREVENTION AND PROTECTION

Should a child disclose any form of abuse, Cornerstones role is to record what is disclosed. Employees should refrain from asking questions the aim is to listen, record and report to the appropriate agency, whether this is the Police or MASH, depending on the abuse disclosed. If unsure refer to the designated safeguarding lead.

The designated 'Safeguarding Lead' who will act as a champion for vulnerable children and provide advice, direct to appropriate training and support for other staff. They will also act as a link with the Safeguarding Children's Board and other multi- agency public protection forums.

We will work in partnership with lead agencies and relevant partners, to prevent and respond to suspicions or incidents of abuse or make safeguarding enquiries in accordance with statutory procedures and own Safeguarding Children Procedure.

Incidents of abuse that are a criminal offence will be reported to the Police. If you are there at the time the incident is happening you will need to call '999', otherwise log via '101' or by reporting via the Police's online reporting form [Report a crime | Devon & Cornwall Police](#)

4. CONSENT

If we have a concern about a child it is our responsibility to speak to a parent or person with parental responsibility for the child before making a referral to the MASH (Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights – respect for a private and family life).

Consent is not required if specific child protection needs have been identified or if asking parents or individuals with parental responsibility for consent puts a child at risk of harm or distress.

If the child is aged 13 and over they should be asked to provide their own consent.

5. SUPPORTING VICTIMS

Victims of abuse and their carers will be referred for support from social services, voluntary support agencies and health agencies as appropriate.

6. STAFF TRAINING AND CONDUCT

We will provide our staff with training that is appropriate to their role so that they understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and are aware of, can identify, and report the signs of abuse.

Cornerstone will ensure that contractors comply with their contractual obligations, working in partnership with or instructed by Cornerstone. We will ensure contractors we work with have their own safeguarding policy in place and provide access to training should there be an identified need.

The Safeguarding Lead will ensure that Housing Officers are advised on multi-agency policies and procedures.

We will develop and implement internal procedures for staff that establish clear lines of accountability, responsibility and processes for reporting safeguarding concerns.

We will provide support and supervision for staff, creating an environment in which they feel able to report safeguarding issues, including where they have concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff.

Any suspected abuse by our own staff will be addressed through formal statutory investigative procedures and our own internal disciplinary procedures. Our Whistleblowing Policy can be used if a member of staff has concerns about how a safeguarding issue is being dealt with.

In order to protect themselves from allegations of abuse, or situations that could be misunderstood, our staff will maintain strong professional boundaries as outlined in our Code of Conduct.

7. INFORMATION SHARING & DATA PROTECTION

Commented [LH1]: Refer to the procedure, is there one? It should read that all Cornerstone employees will familiarise themselves with the procedure and act in accordance with the policy and procedure. If policies and procedures could be put online this could be completed as part of the induction confirming date and time these have been read and confirmation from the employee that they will act in accordance of these.

We will seek consent to share information wherever possible, but where consent is not given or not possible, we will share information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR and our own Privacy Policy. We will comply with our statutory duty to supply information where requested, for the purpose of safeguarding. We will always report safeguarding concerns as health and safety of residents and colleagues sits outside of data protection.

Data we may hold regarding safeguarding concerns can be sensitive personal data; it will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR and our own Privacy Policy.

8. RECORDING AND MONITORING

We will keep accurate and up to date records of safeguarding concerns and monitor their progress through supervisions and multi-agency meetings, where appropriate. An Internal Safeguarding Report will be completed when cases are escalated for investigation.

Appendix 1 - Types and indicators of abuse

(Source: Devon Children and Families Partnership www.dcfp.org.uk)

Key messages

Signs of abuse can often be difficult to detect. This at a glance briefing aims to help people who come into contact with children with care and support needs to identify abuse and recognise possible indicators. Many types of abuse are also criminal offences and should be treated as such.

Types of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Mental Abuse or Psychological abuse
- Online abuse
- Domestic violence and abuse
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Female genital mutilation
- Child sexual exploitation
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Forced marriage and honour killings
- Child trafficking and modern slavery
- County lines
- Witnessing any form of abuse towards a parent or carer, (ACE's)

Evidence of any one indicator from the following lists should not be taken on its own as proof that abuse is occurring. However, it should alert practitioners to make further assessments and to consider other associated factors. The lists of possible indicators and examples of behaviour are not exhaustive and people may be subject to a number of abuse types at the same time.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately hurting or injuring a child. This could be caused by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or other physical harm. This type of abuse can leave more than physical marks on the body.

Physical abuse can make children feel anxious and depressed. They may feel completely isolated and try to harm themselves or run away. It is common for children who are physically abused to have little or no self-esteem and trouble eating and/or sleeping properly. They may display signs of anger and be unable to concentrate on tasks or school work.



Children who are physically abused may be suffering from different types of abuse at the same time.

Physical abuse can impact on every aspect of a child's life and continue to affect them into adulthood. Long-term abuse can lead to difficulties in forming close relationships, finding and sustaining a job or career, and have an impact on relationships with their own children.

Other types of physical abuse

Another type of physical abuse is when a parent or carer makes up or causes the symptoms of a serious illness in their child. They might give the child unnecessary medication and make them unwell. This is known as fabricated or induced illness.

Shaking or hitting babies is a form of physical abuse which can cause non-accidental head injuries (NAHI).

Sexual abuse

Child sexual abuse is when someone persuades or forces a child to take part in sexual activities, or encourages a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. It doesn't necessarily involve physical contact and can also take place online.

Sexual abuse with contact can include sexual touching, whether the child is wearing clothes or not, all penetrative sex and forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities, which may include grooming, sexual; exploitation. Engaging in sexual activity in front of a child and making, permitting to take, distributing and showing or advertising indecent images of children

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child. It is sometimes called psychological abuse and can seriously damage a child's mental health and wellbeing. Emotional abuse can take different forms. For example:

When a child is unfairly blamed for everything, told they are stupid, worthless or ugly and made to feel very sad and unhappy.

Not letting a child express their views, deliberately silencing them or mocking what they say or how they communicate.

When inappropriate expectations are imposed on them, having their capacity to learn restricted, or being prevented from normal social interaction.

It may involve bullying or cyberbullying, making a child feel frightened or in danger or exploiting or corrupting them.

Emotional abuse can have long-lasting and devastating effects on a child's emotional health and development. Children and young people who are emotionally abused may also be the victims of other types of abuse, such as physical abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

Neglect

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic and essential needs. This can include not getting enough to eat or being left alone in dangerous situations. Children need adequate food, water, shelter, warmth, protection, health care and they need their carers to be attentive, dependable and kind. If a child does not have a safe and stable home, this is neglect.

There are many signs that may indicate that a child is being neglected. If your common sense and instincts tell you that something is wrong then you should take action.

Children may be neglected because they come from disadvantaged backgrounds, although most children from such backgrounds are well cared for. A child's circumstances may make them more vulnerable to neglect, such as children who are in care or seeking asylum.

A child who is neglected will often suffer from other forms of abuse as well, such as physical, sexual or emotional, although this isn't always the case. Neglect is dangerous and can have a debilitating and long-term effect on a child's physical wellbeing, and on their mental, emotional and behavioural development. In severe cases, the effects can cause permanent disabilities and even death.

Mental or Psychological Abuse

Emotional abuse is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child. It's sometimes called psychological abuse. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate, or ignore a child.

Online Abuse

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet, through social media, online gaming or mobile phones. Children and young people may be the victims of online grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. They also may be exposed to sexting, online misrepresentation and cyberbullying.

Sexting is where people share sexual images via text message or through messaging apps such as Whatsapp, Facebook Messenger or SnapChat. It is illegal for anyone to post an indecent or nude picture online of someone under 18.

Online misrepresentation, popularly known as 'catfishing', is when someone pretends to be someone else to befriend people online. Often, people use pictures of people that are younger than themselves or of the opposite sex on social media accounts and chat rooms. These relationships can become romantic and sometimes lead to emotional or sexual abuse.

Bullying that occurs on social media, online gaming or via mobile phones is called cyberbullying. It can be more harmful than other forms of bullying as it can occur day or night. It is sometimes harder to trace the bully online.

Children and young people can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as strangers. They may or may not be experiencing abuse in the real world as well.

Domestic violence and abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a personal or family relationship. The most prevalent type of domestic abuse occurs in personal relationships, but the definition of domestic abuse also covers abuse between family members, such as adolescent to parent violence and abuse.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background. Both men and women can be abused or abusers.

It can involve someone using emotional, sexual, financial or psychological abuse to maintain power and control over another person.

Abusive behaviour can occur even after the relationship has ended. Domestic abuse can seriously harm children and young people. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships.

Fabricated or induced illness

Fabricated or induced illness (FII) is a rare form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or carer exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in a child, and can cause significant harm both physically and emotionally.

It can involve a well child being presented by a parent or carer as ill or disabled, or an ill or disabled child being presented with a more significant problem than they actually have.

The NHS have produced a useful guide outlining the signs and causes and what happens if someone suspects FII. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/fabricated-or-induced-illness/>

Female genital mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is when a girl's genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed for no medical reason. It is also known as female circumcision or cutting. It is usually carried out on young girls between infancy and 15 years old, most commonly before puberty starts. However, it can also be carried out during adolescence or before a young woman gets married.

The painful procedure is often performed by someone with no medical training, with no anaesthetic or antiseptic and while the girl is forcibly restrained. It carries serious health risks and can cause severe, long-lasting damage including problems with sex, childbirth and mental health.

There are no health benefits to FGM. Religious, social or cultural reasons are often given; however, it is child abuse and it is against the law. It is also illegal for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to take their child abroad to undergo FGM. Anyone found guilty of this crime faces a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison. All women and girls have the right to control what happens to their bodies.

What are the signs of FGM?

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen. She might be aware of a special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage. She could be going on a long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family, or a relative or 'cutter' might visit from abroad. She may also know of a female relative being cut previously.

A girl who has had FGM may have difficulty walking, standing or sitting and could spend longer in the bathroom or toilet. They could also appear withdrawn, anxious or depressed and exhibit unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college. They may also be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations and could ask for help but not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

Reporting FGM

FGM is a crime and must be reported to the police.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of abuse. A young person is encouraged, manipulated or forced into taking part in a sexual act, (such as penetrative sex, sexual touching, masturbation or the misuse of sexual images – for example on the internet or by mobile phone) often in exchange for something.

This could be part of a seemingly consensual relationship, or could involve control through force, threat, manipulation – for example in return for attention, affection, gifts, money, drugs, alcohol or somewhere to stay.

Spot the signs

Child sexual exploitation is hard to spot, even for the young person affected, because there is no standard profile of an abuser or victim.

Many of the signs that a young person is being sexually exploited could be seen as common teenage behaviours but keep an eye out for increased instances of changes in behaviour that may be signs of grooming. These could include:

- unexplained gifts or possessing items such as phones or jewellery that you haven't given them and which they couldn't afford to buy themselves

- changes in mood or becoming emotionally volatile (mood swings are common in all young people, but more severe changes could indicate that something is wrong)
- going missing, staying out late or staying out all night
- being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going
- lack of interest in activities and hobbies
- missing school
- sudden changes in their appearance and wearing more revealing clothes
- using sexual language that you wouldn't expect them to know
- engaging less with their usual friends
- appearing controlled by their phone
- switching to a new screen when you come near the computer.
- Less common behaviours and indicators of exploitation could include:
- being associated with a gang
- becoming estranged from family
- becoming involved in drugs or alcohol, particularly if you suspect they are being supplied by older men or women
- associating with older men and women, particularly if they go missing and are being defensive about where they are and what they're doing
- having more than one, or a secret phone.

Are you a young person who wants to find out more about CSE, including signs that someone might be trying to groom you or how to tell if someone you care about is being exploited? There's lots of information, including how to get help on Devon County Council's website: <https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/young-people/reach-reducing-exploitation-and-absence-from-care-or-home/child-sexual-exploitation-are-you-relationship-safe>

If you think a child could be in immediate danger contact the local police team (<https://www.police.uk/contact/>) at once or dial 999.

If you are concerned about a child's welfare, contact Devon's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 155 1071 or 0845 6000 388 out of hours

Radicalisation and extremism

Radicalisation is when someone starts to believe or support extreme views, and in some cases, then participates in terrorist groups or acts.

It can be motivated by a range of factors, including ideologies, religious beliefs, political beliefs and prejudices against particular groups of people.

People may be radicalised in many different ways, and over different time frames from as little as a few days or hours, or it may take several years.

Who is at risk?

Anyone can be radicalised, but factors such as being easily influenced and impressionable make children and young people particularly vulnerable.

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem or be victims of bullying or discrimination. They may feel:

- isolated and lonely or wanting to belong
- unhappy about themselves and what others might think of them
- embarrassed or judged about their culture, gender, religion or race
- stressed or depressed
- fed up of being bullied or treated badly by other people or by society
- angry at other people or the government
- confused about what they are doing
- pressured to stand up for other people who are being oppressed

What are the signs?

It can be hard to know when extreme views become something dangerous, and the signs of radicalisation aren't always obvious.

There is no specific profile for a person likely to become involved in extremism or a single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas. Radicalisation can be difficult to spot, but signs that could indicate a child is being radicalised include:

- a change in behaviour
- changing their circle of friends
- isolating themselves from family and friends
- talking as if from a scripted speech
- unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- increased levels of anger
- increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- accessing extremist material online
- using extremist or hate terms to exclude others or incite violence
- writing or creating artwork promoting violent extremist messages

However, these signs don't necessarily mean a child is being radicalised – sometimes it may be normal teenage behaviour or a sign that something else is wrong. If you are concerned about a child's welfare, contact Devon's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 155 1071 or 0845 6000 388 out of hours

Forced marriage and honour killings

Everyone has the right to choose who they marry and when they marry, or if they marry at all.

Forced marriage is when someone does not consent and faces pressure to marry. This pressure could be physical (for example threats, physical violence or sexual violence) or emotional and psychological pressure (for example if someone is made to feel like they are bringing shame on their family).

Men, women and children of all ages and backgrounds can be victims of forced marriage.

Forced marriage is a serious abuse of human rights and is illegal in the UK. This includes taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether the forced marriage takes place or not) and marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they are pressured or not).

Find out more about: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>

Forced marriage is different from an arranged marriage, where families take a leading role in choosing a partner for their son or daughter and both parties give their full and free consent.

Honour killings

An honour killing is the murder of a person by members of their family or social group, carried out in the name of protecting cultural beliefs or honour with the purpose of controlling behaviour.

Those targeted are believed to have shamed their family or community or violated the principles of their religion.

They are often linked to reasons such as refusing to enter an arranged marriage, being in a relationship that is disapproved by their family, having sex outside of marriage, becoming the victim of rape, dressing in ways which are deemed inappropriate, engaging in homosexual relations or renouncing a faith.

Honour killings are especially targeted against women and homosexuals, and occur in various cultures worldwide, including in the UK

Child trafficking and modern slavery

Modern slavery is when someone has gained control over, or ownership of, another person and is using this power to exploit them. It involved the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of men, women or children using force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means in order to exploit them.

Someone is a victim of modern slavery if they have experienced any of the following:

- are forced to work because of physical or verbal threats
- are owned or controlled by an 'employer', usually through mental, emotional, sexual or physical abuse, or the threat of such abuse
- are dehumanised, treated as a commodity, or bought and sold as 'property'
- being held captive, have restrictions placed on their freedom or being moved against their will

Child trafficking is when children are recruited and moved to be exploited, forced to work or sold.

Children are trafficked for all sorts of reasons, including child sexual exploitation, forced labour, criminal activity (such as pick pocketing or transporting drugs), benefit fraud, forced marriage or domestic servitude (such as cleaning, cooking and childcare).

Boys and girls of all ages can be victims of trafficking. Many children are trafficked into the UK from abroad, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Trafficked children experience multiple forms of abuse. Physical, sexual and emotional violence are often used to control victims of trafficking. Children are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected.

What are the signs that a child has been trafficked?

Identifying a child who has been trafficked is difficult as they are intentionally hidden and isolated from the services and communities who can identify and protect them. Signs that a child has been trafficked may not be obvious, but could include:

- rarely leaving the house
- having no time to play
- living apart from family or having limited social contact with friends, family and the community
- appearing unfamiliar with a neighbourhood
- being seen in inappropriate places (for example factories or brothels)
- being unsure of where they live
- having their movements controlled or being unable to travel on their own
- living somewhere inappropriate, like a work address or dirty, cramped, unhygienic or overcrowded accommodation, including caravans, sheds, tents or outbuildings
- lacking personal items
- consistently wearing the same clothes
- often being moved by others between specific locations (for example to and from work) – this may happen at unusual times such as very early in the day or at night
- being unable or reluctant to give details such as where they live
- fearful or withdrawn behaviour, or efforts made to disguise this
- being involved in gang activity
- being involved in the consumption, sale or trafficking of drugs
- having their communication controlled by another – may act as though instructed by, or dependent upon, someone else
- tattoos or other marks indicating ownership
- physical or psychological abuse, ill health, exhaustion or injury – may look unkempt and malnourished
- reluctance to seek help, avoidance of strangers, being fearful or hostile towards authorities
- providing a prepared story if questioned or struggling to recall experiences
- inconsistent accounts of their experiences



This is not an exhaustive list. The warning signs presented by children and young people who are being exploited will present differently for each individual.

Children may find it hard to understand that what's happening is abuse – especially if they have been groomed. A victim of grooming may believe they are in a relationship with their abuser and be unaware that they are being exploited.

They also may not understand that child trafficking is abuse and that they have done nothing wrong. They might think they played a part in their abuse or that they're guilty of breaking the law if they have been forced in to criminal activity.

County Lines

'County lines' is the police term used to describe gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas, market and coastal towns across the UK using dedicated mobile phone lines. These organised crime networks exploit children and young people to store, move, sell and deliver their drugs, often making them travel across counties. They use children because they are cheaper, more easily controlled and less likely to be picked up by the police.

Vulnerable children and young people, for example those who are homeless or living in care, have special educational needs or mental health problem, are targeted by gangs and are recruited, often via social media. Gangs also look for children with emotional vulnerability, such as those experiencing problems at home, absent or busy parents or bereavement, and then seek and fill that emotional gap and become 'their family', then take advantage of them.

These children and young people are groomed, threatened or tricked into trafficking drugs for gangs who often use intimidation and violence, or threaten the young person's family. They might also offer something in return for the young person's cooperation, for example money, food, alcohol, clothes and jewellery, or improved status, but these gifts will usually be manipulated so that the child feels they are in debt to their exploiter and have no choice but to do what they want.

What are the signs that a child or young person is involved in county lines?

- leaving home without explanation
- returning home unusually late or staying out all night
- coming home looking particularly dishevelled
- unexplained injuries or suspicion of physical assault
- persistently going missing or being found in areas away from home
- being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going
- meeting with unfamiliar people or associating with a gang
- becoming isolated from peers and friends
- having a friendship or relationship with someone who appears older or controlling
- unexplained absences from school, college, training or work
- loss of interest in school, college or work and decline in performance
- sudden changes in lifestyle

- significant changes in emotional wellbeing
- increasingly disruptive or aggressive and violent behaviour
- using sexual, gang, drug-related or violent language you wouldn't expect them to know
- starting or increasing drug use, or being found to have large amounts of drugs on them
- unexplained money, phone(s), clothes or jewellery
- having hotel cards or keys to unknown places
- using more than one phone
- receiving an excessive amount of texts or phone calls
- carrying a weapon

This is not an exhaustive list. The indicators for exploitation can sometimes be mistaken for 'normal adolescent behaviours' and the warning signs presented by children and young people who are being exploited will present differently for each individual.

Witnessing any form of abuse towards a parent or carer

Witnessing abuse and feeling powerless to stop this can have an extremely traumatic effect on a child that they will carry into adulthood. Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are things that happen before adulthood that can cause trauma. Or they're things that make a child feel like their home isn't safe or stable. Some examples of ACEs include:

- Violence
- Neglect
- Abuse
- Family mental health
- Substance use problems
- Alcoholism
- Separation or divorce

Whilst we should not interrogate a child who discloses information, you may like to reference the questions on this form following a disclosure to pass relevant information to statutory agencies, [Adverse Childhood Experience Questionnaire for Adults](#)

What are the signs a child has witnessed abuse of a parent or carer

Signs and indicators that a child has witnessed domestic abuse can include:

- Withdrawn or detached behaviour
- Ambivalent feelings towards both the abuser and the non-abusing parent
- Constant or frequent sickness
- Frustration or aggression
- Bullying peers

- Problems in school or with learning