

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Risk Assessment Tool Guidance.

Please read this guidance before completing the Risk Assessment Tool.

This tool is designed to assist practitioners to explore vulnerabilities and indicators which may be present for a child or young person where you have concerns that they are at risk of, or experiencing sexual exploitation. This tool can be used to give context to the concerns raised in a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) or as a tool to refer concerns to the Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation Meeting (MASE). MASE referrals should be made, in consultation with the relevant line manager, where there is a blocker that is preventing progress and/or effective safeguarding responses, or where there is strategic information that will inform multi-agency intervention and disruption activity in relation to victims, offenders, locations, and trends (VOLT).

The pathway in which this tool is used to refer into the MASE will be determined by whether the case is already an open case to Children's Services. If Children's Services are not already aware that the referred child is at risk of CSE, then the tool should be completed, accompanied by a MARF and sent to the Barking and Dagenham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). MASH referrals should be set to childrenss@lbbd.gov.uk This is for there to be a multi-agency overview of the concerns around CSE at the point they are identified and the relevant agencies are able to take immediate action if necessary.

If the case is already open to Children's Services and the risks of CSE have already been identified, the tool can be sent directly to MASE to be presented at the next MASE meeting which takes place monthly. MASE referrals should be sent to MASEReferrals@lbbd.gov.uk

Note: Practitioners should alert the Police via 999 if you feel that a young person is at any immediate risk of CSE.

The tool is designed to be completed in various ways. Ideally it should be completed with the young person and their parent/ carer if possible, as they are best placed to give a clear picture of risks. We should always try to capture the voice of the young person within the Risk Assessment. There will be occasions when this is not possible or appropriate and you should use your professional judgement in this matter. **This form should be completed by a professional and not given to a young person or parent / carer to complete in isolation.**

This tool should ideally be completed by a professional who has some knowledge and a working relationship with the child or young person. CSE is a sensitive topic and young people may not realise that they are at risk and may find it difficult to answer questions of a sensitive nature with a professional they hold no relationship with. However, if you are an agency which holds significant information, such as health records, which indicate clear risks of CSE, you should use professional judgement about whether it is more appropriate to complete the form without the initial input of the young person or parent/ carer.

This tool can be used at a single point or as an ongoing assessment of risk. On cases subject to ongoing intervention, it should be adapted and updated every 3 months to reflect changes in the young person's circumstances and to track outcomes and the effectiveness of plans. It should be completed with multi-agency input to provide a more comprehensive picture where possible.

Completing the tool with the Young Person or Parent / Carer;

The tool is for the use of professionals and therefore the questions are at times framed in professional terminology. It will be down to you as a professional to use and possibly reframe the questions to be sensitive to the fact that the young person or parent/ carer may find elements of CSE difficult to openly discuss.

If there are certain areas which the young person uncomfortable discussing, it may be suitable to move on and to revisit these at a later stage. If they have difficulty discussing some of the issues verbally, it may be easier for the young person, parent or carer to write them down. Children and young people with communication needs may need specialist help to tell their story.

The young person may find it easier to provide a narrative of their experience rather than being initially prompted by questions. Keeping questions open ended and asking them to clarify or expand on certain areas should provide sufficient information to be able to complete the tool.

Parents / Carers will often be able to offer a good amount of insight as they are managing the risk to the young person daily. Working in partnership with the parent / carer is important when safety planning with the young person.

It is important to remember that the experiences of young people can vary greatly and therefore not all parts of the tool may be applicable.