

Child sexual exploitation and children missing from home, care or education

A 'deep dive' theme for Ofsted targeted local authority inspections

This document should be read alongside the framework and inspection guidance for Ofsted Targeted Local Authority Inspections (targeted inspections).

These inspections include an evaluation of the 'front door' for child protection, where children at risk of harm first become known to the local authority; this is a part of all targeted inspections.

Targeted inspections include a 'deep dive' investigation. The deep dive is an evaluation of the experiences of children and young people at risk of a specific type (or types) of harm, or the support and care of children looked after and/or care leavers; this part of the targeted inspection will change between inspections to investigate different themes. Deep dive themes will be developed according to the concerns Ofsted has about specific local authorities, or where the inspection of a particular theme will highlight effective practice from which other local authorities can learn.

This document outlines guidance for when the deep dive theme is child sexual exploitation and children missing from home, care or education.

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Introduction

1. This guidance is to assist inspectors when they conduct an Ofsted targeted local authority inspection (targeted inspection) that includes a deep dive investigation on the response to child sexual exploitation and children missing from home, care or education. It should be read alongside the framework and guidance for these inspections.¹
2. Inspectors will track and sample the experiences of children and young people. Tracking is an in depth, 'end to end' look at the experiences of between five and seven children and young people who are at risk of sexual exploitation. Sampling is a more targeted look at the experiences of a greater number of children, focusing on particular points in these children's journeys. Sampling will focus on the experiences of children at risk of sexual exploitation and those who have been missing from home, care or education. Guidance on tracking and sampling is in the framework and inspection guidance.
3. Children who have been missing from home, care or education are not automatically at risk of sexual exploitation. However, going missing is a recognised risk factor. Looking at the experiences of children who have gone missing will help inspectors to evaluate whether local agencies accurately and reliably identifying the risks to these children.

Scope of the inspection

4. All targeted inspections are of local authority arrangements for:
 - the response to all forms of child abuse, neglect and exploitation at the point of identification
 - the quality and impact of assessment, planning and decision-making in response to notifications and referrals
 - protecting children and young people at risk of a specific type (or types) of harm, or the support and care of children looked after and/or care leavers (evaluated through a deep dive investigation into the experiences of these children)
 - the leadership and management of this work
 - the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in relation to this work.

¹ *Ofsted Targeted Local Authority Inspection: framework and guidance*;
www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-inspection-of-local-authority-arrangements-and-services-for-children-in-need-of-help-and-protection

Evaluation criteria

5. When the deep dive investigation is of the response to child sexual exploitation – including the identification of those at risk, and those missing from home, care or education – inspectors will evaluate:
- whether risks to missing and absent children are appropriately assessed and individual children and families receive support (ESN 23)²
 - how effectively the local authority tracks and responds to children missing from education (ESN 24)
 - whether the local authority works effectively with other agencies to investigate and respond to the circumstances that cause children to be missing or absent (ESN 25)
 - whether the local authority effectively assesses risks to effectively tackle child sexual exploitation and support those children (ESN 26)
 - whether return home interviews are offered to children, are of good quality and are used at an individual and strategic level to tackle risk (ESN 27)
 - the effectiveness of work with young people who are perpetrators of sexual exploitation, such as those involved with gangs or peer-on-peer exploitation (ESN 28)
 - whether any concerns raised through whistleblowing about the protection of children have been responded to (ESN 29)
 - how effectively the local authority works with other agencies to tackle sexual and other forms of exploitation of children (ESN 30)
 - the availability and quality of support and access to post-abuse therapeutic help for children suffering sexual exploitation (ESN 31)
 - how well the local authority collates/seek the views of users and acts on users' views, on an individual basis and in service design and delivery (ESN 32)
 - whether local elected members scrutinise and challenge services and the impact of this on practice (ESN 33)
 - how effectively the workforce meets its responsibilities (ESN 34)
 - how well leaders and managers know and understand the experiences of children at risk of sexual exploitation and those who go missing from home, care or education (ESN 35)
 - how effectively leaders and managers use their knowledge to challenge and support practitioners and promote continuous improvement in services for children at risk of sexual exploitation and those who go missing from home, care or education (ESN 36)
 - whether the LSCB actively monitors, promotes, coordinates and evaluates the work of the local authority to help, protect and care for children at risk of sexual exploitation and those who go missing from home, care or education (ESN 37)

² The evaluation schedule numbers (ESN) are a referencing system to support inspectors when they record their findings in evidence records.

Annex A. Information requested to support the inspection

6. This annex outlines the information inspectors request from the local authority where the deep dive theme for the targeted inspection is child sexual exploitation and children missing from home, care or education. The information is listed in the order that the local authority are asked to submit it to the inspection team.

List of children at risk of child sexual exploitation

7. **By the end of the day that the local authority is notified of the inspection** (Tuesday of week one), the Director of Children's Services (DCS) should provide a list of those children at risk of child sexual exploitation, both living in the local authority area and those living outside the area but for whom the local authority is responsible. The lead inspector will use this list to select the children whose experiences inspectors will track and the local authority are asked to jointly evaluate. Where possible, the list should include the fields stated below.
 - Child unique ID
 - Gender
 - Ethnicity
 - Date of birth
 - Age of child (in years)
 - Disability
 - Number of episodes when the child or young person has been missing from home or care in the last six months
 - Whether the child or young person is currently in receipt of full-time school education
 - Allocated team
 - Allocated worker
 - Date when the child was first known to be at risk of sexual exploitation
 - A short summary of actions and decisions
 - Any additional information that the local area uses on a day-to-day basis to monitor these children and young people.
8. If there are particular contextual issues faced by the local authority in relation to child sexual exploitation, the DCS can advise the lead inspector of this when they provide this list. The lead inspector will take this into account when selecting the children whose experiences inspectors will track and sample.

9. **By midday on day one** (Wednesday), the lead inspector selects 20 children from the list of those at risk of sexual exploitation and asks the local authority to provide additional information on these 20. **By mid-afternoon of day two** (Thursday) the local authority should provide the following information on each of the 20 children:
- is the child or young person known to the Youth Offending Team (Y/N)
 - are they a looked after child or young person (Y/N)
 - if looked after by another local authority, which authority
 - postcode where the child is living.
10. **By the end of day two**, the lead inspector will inform the local authority of between five and seven children whose experiences they should evaluate. The local authority should provide key documents associated with these children **by the end of day five** (Tuesday week two) and their evaluations **by the end of day seven** (Thursday of week two). See the section *Key case file documents* below for further information

Child-level lists and details of planned multi-agency meetings

11. **By the end of day two** (Thursday) the local authority should provide the lead inspector with details of multi-agency meetings taking place during the fieldwork week, including: initial child protection conferences; review child protection conferences; looked after children’s reviews; strategy discussions; and any other planning or review meeting relating to children at risk of sexual exploitation or who have been missing.
12. The local authority should also provide further lists of child-level data. Inspectors will use these lists to develop lines of enquiry and identify children whose experiences they will sample while onsite in the local area.³

List	Detail required
<p>Contacts</p> <p>All those who have been the subject of a contact in the three months prior to inspection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child unique ID ■ Gender ■ Ethnicity ■ Date of birth ■ If unborn: expected date of birth ■ Age of child (years) ■ Date of contact ■ Contact source <input type="checkbox"/>

³ Unless otherwise indicated, the content of these lists is the same as the equivalent lists requested for an inspection of the local authority as part of Ofsted’s single inspection framework.

List	Detail required
<p>Referrals</p> <p>All those who have been the subject of a referral in the three months prior to inspection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child unique ID ■ Gender ■ Ethnicity ■ Date of birth ■ If unborn: expected date of birth ■ Age of child (years) ■ Date of the most recent referral ■ Referral source ■ Referral NFA? (Y/N) ■ Number of referrals in last 12 months ■ Allocated team ■ Allocated worker
<p>Assessments</p> <p>All those who have been the subject of a statutory assessment in accordance with section 17 or section 47 of the Children Act 1989 in the six months prior to inspection.</p> <p>This includes assessments that have started but are not yet completed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child unique ID ■ Gender ■ Ethnicity ■ Date of birth ■ If unborn: expected date of birth ■ Age of child (Years) ■ Does the child have a disability? (Y/N) ■ assessment start date ■ Child seen during assessment (Y/N) ■ assessment date of authorisation ■ Allocated team ■ Allocated worker
<p>Section 47</p> <p>All those who have been the subject of a section 47 enquiry in the six months prior to inspection</p> <p>This includes enquiries that are ongoing and an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) decision has not yet been made.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child unique ID ■ Gender ■ Ethnicity ■ Date of birth ■ If unborn: expected date of birth ■ Age of child (years) ■ Does the child have a disability? (Y/N) ■ Section 47 enquiry start date ■ Number of section 47 enquiries in the last 12 months ■ Initial child protection conference not required (Y/N) ■ Date of initial child protection conference ■ Did the initial child protection conference result in a child protection plan? (Y/N) ■ Number of ICPCs in the last 12 months ■ Allocated team ■ Allocated worker

List	Detail required
<p>Children identified as a child in need (CIN)</p> <p>All those in receipt of services as a child in need at the point of inspection and those who ceased to receive services as a child in need in the three months prior to inspection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child unique ID ■ Gender ■ Ethnicity ■ Date of birth ■ If unborn: expected date of birth ■ Age of child (years) ■ Does the child have a disability? (Y/N) ■ CIN start date ■ Primary need code ■ Date child was last seen ■ CIN closure date ■ Reason for closure ■ Allocated team ■ Allocated worker
<p>Children missing from home or care⁴</p> <p>A list of children who have gone missing from home or care in the six months prior to the inspection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child unique ID ■ Date of birth ■ number of episodes when the child or young person has been missing ■ any additional information that the local area uses on a day-to-day basis to monitor these children ■ details about whether they are known to be vulnerable to sexual exploitation ■ is the child or young person known to the Youth Offending Team ■ whether the child is placed in the area but looked after by a different local authority
<p>Children not in full-time school education⁵</p> <p>A report on children, for whom the local authority is responsible, who are of school age and who are not in receipt of full-time school education at the time of inspection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ child unique ID or UPN ■ date of birth ■ type of educational provision that they are receiving, including home tuition ■ number of hours provision per week ■ type of exclusion (if the child has been excluded). ■ date when alternative provision commenced

⁴ This list is the same as item 2.07 in Annex A of Ofsted's single inspection framework for local authorities. The last two fields are additional requests specific to the targeted inspection.

⁵ This list is the same as item 2.06 in Annex A of Ofsted's single inspection framework for local authorities

Key case file documents

13. **By the end of day five** (Tuesday week two) the local authority should provide electronic copies of the following key documents for each of the children whose experiences they have been asked to evaluate (where recent examples exist):
- initial referral/contact/notification (where applicable)
 - most recent assessment, including a common or early help assessment
 - strategy or other multi-agency discussion or equivalent
 - section 47 investigation documentation/ICPC minutes
 - most recent plan for the child and/or review of the plan
 - latest return home interview and any subsequent risk assessments (where appropriate)
 - a chronology of significant events in the six months prior to the inspection. Significant events may include:
 - episodes of the child missing from home, care or education
 - any information held by the local authority on contact the child has had with the police – as either a victim or suspect – such as reported incidents, crimes and investigations and reports of the child being missing or absent
 - information on events earlier than the six months prior to the inspection where this is necessary to understand the context of the child’s experience.
14. The local authority should provide their evaluations of children’s experiences electronically **by the end of day seven** (Thursday of week two). Access to a secure online site has been arranged to receive the case file documents and evaluations electronically. Printed copies of the documents related to the children whose experiences the local authority has evaluated should be made available for when inspectors arrive onsite.

Other information to support the inspection

15. **By the end of day five** (Tuesday, week two) the local authority should provide the information outlined below to help inspectors understand the work of the local authority. The local authority should not provide everything they hold on each subject; they should provide their **best and most recent examples**. They should provide this information electronically.

The local authority

- 1.1 – **organisational structures** showing lines of reporting and accountability
- 1.2 – **management information reports** for those children within the scope of the inspection

1.3 – **assessment and threshold criteria** for helping families and protecting the identified children

1.4 – **sample practice audits**, over the six months prior to the inspection relating to the focus of the inspection, and associated **improvement/action plans**

1.5 – details of any relevant **services in the area commissioned from the community or voluntary sector** (for example those relating to missing, absent and sexually exploited children)

1.6 – minutes of Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) meetings

1.7 – terms of reference for the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or local equivalent

The LSCB

2.1 – **organisational structures** showing lines of reporting and accountability

2.2 – minutes of LSCB meetings from the 12 months prior to the inspection (including executive board meetings where applicable)

2.3 – structure of the LSCB and sub-groups; names and contact details for LSCB members

2.4 – sub-group minutes as requested by the lead inspector.

Consent to meet with children, young people, parents and carers

16. The lead inspector will ask the local authority to arrange opportunities for inspectors to talk directly with the children whose experiences they will track. The local authority should record consent from children and parents or carers. Where consent is not given or a discussion is not possible, the local authority should inform the lead inspector of the reasons. Arrangements to talk with these children, parents or carers, or the reasons why these discussions cannot take place, should be confirmed by local authority in writing as soon as possible and by the end of week two.

Annex B. Tool for tracking children's experiences

The inspection team uses the tracking tool to ensure that they are consistently recording evaluations of evidence from tracking individual children and young people's experiences. The questions reflect the experiences of children and young people at each key stage of intervention.

Inspector	
Inspectorate	
Case number	
Age of child/young person	
Does the child have any individual needs relating to their circumstances? (for example, their ethnicity or a disability)	

Evaluation by the local authority

Does the joint evaluation by the local partnership accurately evaluate the experiences of the child? (where an evaluation has taken place)	
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Inspector's evaluation

	Evaluative summary of child/young person's experience
Was referral for action timely for the child?	
Is risk identified, understood and prioritised? Does the child appear to be safe?	
Has decision-making matched the priority risks and needs?	
Where an assessment has been completed, are risks, needs and strengths clear?	
Is there a plan? Is it sufficient to address risk and need? Is it making a difference?	
Has the child been involved/engaged at all stages? Have family/carers been involved at all stages?	
Have individual needs and circumstances been taken into account?	
Do the agencies work together effectively to protect the child?	