



CSAP Contextual Safeguarding Strategy 2022-2024

Our strategic approach to Contextual Safeguarding describing how agencies across the region will work together

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Children's
Safeguarding Assurance
Partnership
Blackburn with Darwen - Blackpool - Lancashire

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Purpose of the Strategy

This document is CSAP's strategy for addressing and continually improving our approach to Contextual Safeguarding. The strategy describes how agencies across Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire will work together to address any concerns relating to Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation, Missing Children and Modern Day Slavery within a trauma-informed and strength-based approach.

Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2018) legislation discusses the importance of working together to identify and respond to harm and abuse posed to children outside of their home.

Definition of Contextual Safeguarding

'Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to children and young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families'. (<https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>)

Scope of the Strategy

Contextual Safeguarding seeks to identify and respond to harm and abuse posed to children outside their home, either from adults or other young people. As individuals move from early childhood and into adolescence, they spend increasing amounts of time socialising independently of their families. During this time the nature of young people's schools, neighbourhoods, and social media platforms and the relationships that they form in these settings, inform the extent to which they encounter protection or abuse.

Aspirationally, the strategy will be extended to cover the 0-25 age range, akin to the SEND agenda and Care Leavers framework. Roll out of this extended age range will be dependent on each area's demand and available resource. Local working arrangements should reflect this scope.

This Contextual Safeguarding strategy will be inclusive of:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- Child Trafficking / Modern Slavery
- Missing From Home

Evidence informed ways of working are core to our approach. Our strategy takes account of national guidance, research, and examples of good practice. The Contextual Safeguarding Strategic Board works in coordination with the local Operational Groups to improve practice for children and young people who are at risk of harm and exploitation outside of the family home.

Vision and Principles of our Strategy

We want all areas of Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire to be safe for children and young people whilst recognising the challenge that exploitation brings. We want everyone to work together; communities, families and professionals to address this agenda – Safeguarding is everyone's business.

Strategic Aim

Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire CSAP and partner agencies aim to work together to support children and adults who are at risk of exploitation, to reduce harm, increase safety and improve wellbeing and outcomes.

Through partnership working and contextual safeguarding approaches, alongside relationship-based, trauma-informed, child-focused support, we aim to ensure that children and young adults in the area are safeguarded from exploitation and other risks outside the home.

This includes safeguarding of those children who are looked after and are placed in our area by other Local Authorities in view of their additional vulnerabilities and to support effective delivery of the strategic objectives by effective multi-agency data gathering, intelligence and profiling.

Strategic Objectives

- Increase our awareness and understanding of Contextual Safeguarding across all agencies
- Work to prevent exploitation; ensuring our interventions will support and protect children and young people at risk of exploitation
- Increase our success in respect of detection, disruption and prosecution; working to support those known to be exploited
- Work alongside and within our communities to tackle exploitation

Accountability and Governance

The BwD, Blackpool and Lancashire Contextual Safeguarding Strategic Board will be responsible for the performance and monitoring of the strategy; delegating this to the Operational groups and receiving regular progress updates. The Contextual Safeguarding Strategic Board will reflect the progress made and escalate any areas of concern through their regular updates to the CSAP Executive Board.

Our Priorities

- Increase our awareness and understanding of Contextual Safeguarding
- Work to prevent exploitation; ensuring our interventions support and protect children and young people at risk of exploitation
- Increase our success in respect of detection, disruption and prosecution; working to support those known to be exploited
- Work alongside and within our communities to tackle exploitation

Priority 1 – Increase Our Awareness and Understanding of Contextual Safeguarding

- We will promote awareness of Contextual Safeguarding across Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire
- We will reach out to our communities
- We will strive to ensure everyone knows how to identify and respond to Contextual Safeguarding

Outcome measure – "Practitioners to feel able to identify and support those at risk of exploitation"

Priority 2 - Work to prevent exploitation; ensuring our interventions support and protect children and young people at risk of exploitation

- The lived experience of children and young people who are at risk of or who have been exploited supports us to develop our knowledge and shape our future practice
- As a partnership, we will be responsive to the need of children and young people at risk
- As a partnership, we will be responsive to how exploitation is changing across the county

Outcome measure – "Children and young people are confident that their feedback and experience will help others"

Priority 3 – Increase our success in respect of detection, disruption and prosecution; working to support those known to be exploited

- We will take robust and early action to challenge the operations of perpetrators of exploitation ensuring we maximise the use of all agencies and the legal powers available to us to disrupt the behaviours
- We will ensure our workforce is informed and empowered to identify and respond to criminality
- We will work together as a partnership in the gathering of intelligence required to identify, challenge and ensure successful prosecution where possible

Outcome measure – "Children and young people are confident that professionals will work together to get the best results"

Outcome measure – "Partners will share intelligence and data to support our understanding of local need"

Priority 4 - Work alongside and within our communities to tackle exploitation

- Our strategy will allow the partnership to effectively engage with communities in respect of the wider contextual safeguarding agenda
- We will engage community groups and organisations directly in order to raise awareness of key issues and ensure an effective response
- We will support our workforce and key stakeholders to recognise their role as members of their own community in responding to and tackling issues

Outcome measure – "Everyone feels empowered and supported to tackle and challenge exploitation from within their own communities"

Measuring Effectiveness

The CSAP Contextual Safeguarding Strategic Board expects the locality Operational Groups to have mechanism in place to understand the local need and ensure an effective response; this should be quantitative and qualitative in nature in order that the impact can be understood. It is important that we do not see success as just data and numbers, but that all of our work is rooted in having a visible and tangible impact on people's lives; providing evidence that we are making a difference for them and their long term outcomes. Appendix 1 provides a list of key questions to help individuals and agencies understand their responsibilities associated with this strategy.

We will evaluate the impact of the strategy by developing performance and quality measures that will be reported in to the Contextual Safeguarding Strategic Board. Annual assurance should also be provided via the CSAP Annual Report.

Appendix 1 – What is your Role?

Whether you are a strategic leader, a frontline worker, a volunteer or an active citizen, protecting those at risk of exploitation and safeguarding people from harm is the responsibility of us all. Ask yourselves these questions:

Organisations ↓

- Is your Executive and Leadership team well informed of the issues and are they quick in their responses to improvement suggestions?
- Do you actively raise awareness of complex safeguarding issues amongst the workforce and those children, young people and adults they engage with?
- Do your employees, volunteers and beneficiaries know how to recognise the signs of exploitation and do they know what actions to take?
- Are your services providing the right support and intervention for survivors, at the right time?
- Do your services positively contribute to prevention and disruption joining partners shared solutions where appropriate?
- Are you supporting connectivity across services, to promote understanding, knowledge and sharing best practice?

Individuals ↓

- Do you know what sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and modern slavery and human trafficking is?
- Do you know the signs of such exploitation?
- Do you know how to refer people at risk to services to safeguard them – for example the National Referral Mechanism or the Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship Service (for Modern Slavery and trafficking)?
- Do you share your knowledge and expertise with your colleagues and partners?
- Are you doing everything you can to safeguard survivors and prevent future harm?
- Do you know the range and role of services working to support and safeguard those at risk of exploitation and survivors?
- Are you taking responsibility to keep yourself up to date on policy and practice?
- Do you act upon issues or concerns in your communities?
- Are you encouraged to access training and support?