

# Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth & Southampton

Quarterly professionals update from the HIPS Child Exploitation Group - Autumn 2022

The HIPS partners continue to work together to tackle child exploitation and the different risks to children that the pandemic has brought. This newsletter keeps professionals in all four areas up-to-date with issues and progress discussed in the HIPS Child Exploitation meetings and to flag up local and national campaigns.

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## News from across the Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships

### IOWSCP

The IOW local delivery plan currently contains 178 'Green' items, 52 'Amber' items (where there is work in progress that is underway, or new activity identified) and no 'Red' items. Following work carried out in Education to promote submissions, there is greater understanding and awareness around CPI reporting. Consideration is being given to explore the links between school exclusions/ alternative provision and other vulnerabilities, and plans are currently underway to hold an event as part of National Child Exploitation Awareness Day, in March 2023.

### PSCP

Portsmouth's review of the local delivery plan continues. Leads have been identified for each of the five areas, who are working with agency colleagues to understand what is currently working well and where there might be any gaps. A consultation is taking place to consider the future of services for young people, and the offer from tier 2-4. External support will be utilised over the summer to aid the development of a framework. Consideration will be given to models used in other areas and examples of good practice.

### HSCP

Progress continues to be made with regards to the local delivery plan, with the few outstanding actions being linked to work that is ongoing and expected to conclude over the coming months. At the last session held on 6th July, colleagues initiated a benchmarking exercise in relation to the [JTAI framework](#) and the ['It was Hard to Escape' report](#). Agencies were tasked with providing evidence against the inspection criteria and report their recommendations by the 9th September.

### SSCP

A 'deep dive' audit has been completed which considered the circumstances of two young people in Southampton who had experienced exploitation. Key themes and learning include the importance of early intervention, cross border working, the use of problem profiles to better understand local risk and the development of an Adolescent Safeguarding Strategy. Thought is being given to piloting 'risk outside the home' conferences.

### Please contact your local Safeguarding Children Partnership Team at:

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Southampton—[Safeguarding.partnershipsteam@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:Safeguarding.partnershipsteam@southampton.gov.uk)



## An update from the Youth Commissioners

At the last Youth Commission meeting in July, we reviewed the child exploitation toolkit for schools. Members present agreed that it was suitable for Key Stage 3, and that with a greater focus on discussion-based exercises, would also be suited to Key Stage 4. It was noted that the way slang is incorporated into communication with young people is very important, as it can quickly become cringey when it sounds inauthentic, pulling you out of the moment and reducing the ability to take in the message. This will be included in the packs we are producing centred around engaging with young people. Prior to this meeting, members also formed a panel interviewing the new independent chair for the Hampshire Safeguarding Partnership and have continued to work with both the VRU and VAWG taskforce. We will be setting up the Big Challenge to monitor how partners are responding to our recommendations.

The Substance Misuse team is monitoring Big Conversation responses for mention of both county lines and peer drug networks, however the majority of feedback we've received so far centres around spiking incidents in older youths and vaping among younger. The market around vaping is purposefully enticing young people with bright colours and fun flavours, and the ease of access is of great concern. There is fear of this acting as a gateway to other behaviours. We have met with members of the Princes Trust and Youth Forum in the Isle of Wight, who chose Substance Misuse as their main priority, talking about the lack of safe activities to do and support available, and the demonising of young people.

The Safe on the Streets group continues to be the biggest priority in Hampshire, Southampton, and Portsmouth. Solutions suggested include more police presence and better lighting, especially in small towns, as well as education with the aim of creating a cultural shift. When tasked to put our groups (Safe on the Streets, Substance Misuse, and Hate and Hostility) in order of priority, the conversation always includes how they influence each other. The lack of lighting and safe places leads to kids feeling more isolated and vulnerable, resulting in a greater risk of exploitation and substance misuse. Hate crimes are often committed when intoxicated and can lead to people not feeling safe. It's a cycle that continues to spiral.

We've had around 1200 responses so far to the Big Conversation and are continuing to gain more, the plan is still to attend university freshers fayres in the autumn to increase engagement with the older half of our cohort. In the meantime, the focus is now on forums and groups rather than schools, including a visit to Swanwick Lodge Children's Secure Unit in the August. We will also be participating in the RAYS project by mentoring youth council members in Albania, with the goal of providing young people in the country with new opportunities. This will hopefully help to reduce exploitation by gangs in the UK further down the line, as well as a myriad of other positive impacts for the country.

Amber



## Hampshire Constabulary— Child Protection Inspection

An important report by independent reviewers has commended Hampshire Constabulary's officers and staff for how they investigate child abuse, look after children in custody, and respond to higher risk missing children.

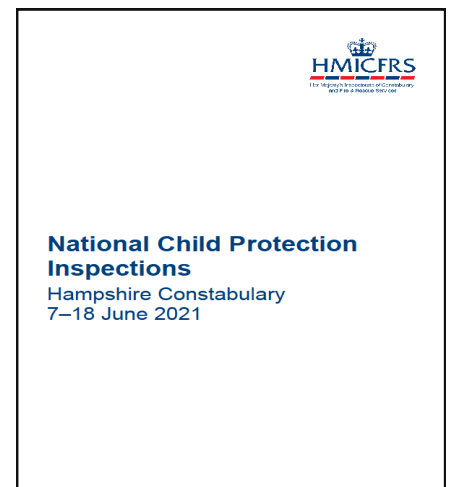
HMICFRS Inspector Roy Wilsher pointed to the force being "good at working with other organisations, such as schools and social care services, to keep children safe", "many examples of good work by frontline officers responding to incidents involving children", and the fact "senior leaders are clearly committed to child protection" with good oversight of how well officers carry out their work.

Following publication of the report, Assistant Chief Constable Craig Dibdin was quick to praise officers and staff, saying it was especially welcome that their commitment and dedication to protect children and to get justice for victims in an increasingly complex and demanding environment was being acknowledged. He praised those in specialist teams and custody, and highlighted the force's use of police protection powers and work with partner agencies.

Staff investigating child protection issues often face some of the most traumatic cases that policing deals with. The HMICFRS report also recognised the importance the force puts on ensuring the health and wellbeing of those who investigate these types of crimes.

HMICFRS highlighted some areas where the force can improve at protecting children. These include providing better outcomes for vulnerable children in Hampshire, how the force manages people who pose a risk to children, and responding to incidents quickly when children are at risk. The force is committed to, and has already begun to, address these issues.

The full report can be accessed by double clicking on this image.



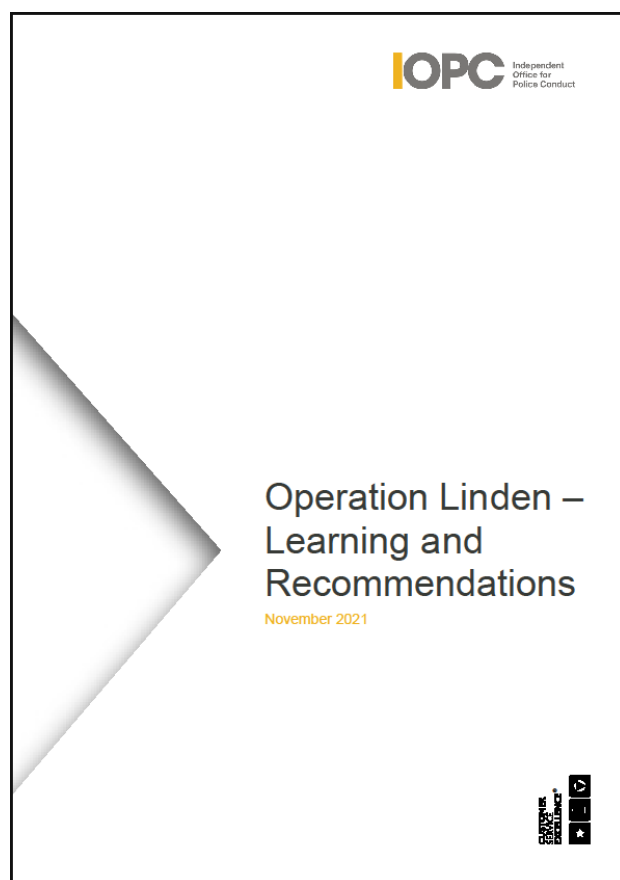
# Recommendations from Operation Linden

Operation Linden is an IOPC investigation of a significant number of complaints and allegations relating to the police response to non-recent child sexual exploitation in the Rotherham area (South Yorkshire Police).

Work began in 2014 and resulted in 93 separate investigations. Operation Linden investigated 265 separate allegations made by 51 individuals complainants, comprised of 44 survivors, 3 family members, and 4 third parties. Subsequently the conduct of 47 officers was investigated, while 21 of these officers had retired, eight were found to have a case to answer for misconduct and six had a case to answer for gross misconduct. Alongside this, 43 of the 164 complaint allegations were upheld.

As part of Operation Linden, thirteen recommendations were produced. Whilst these, as shown below, are for the attention of SYP, the College of Policing, or other National Policing Bodies, it is important that Hampshire Constabulary understands its own processes when dealing with, and responding to, CSA/E.

Double click on the image to view the full Operation Linden Learning and Recommendations report. Over the page will be the list of recommendations that came out of Operation Linden, and how Hampshire can consider and action these recommendations



# Recommendations from Operation Linden

A select few of the learning points applicable to Hampshire Constabulary are listed below.

[Recommendation 3. Use of Operation Linden in Future Training.](#) The College of Policing should look for opportunities to use elements of Operation Linden in future training, ***Hampshire Constabulary should ensure that it understands its own training regimes for dealing with Child Sexual Exploitation and should consider - Does regular training take into account staff turnover? Does training include the voice of survivors?***

[Recommendation 6. Regularly Updating Victims.](#) SYP should take steps to ensure that victims are regularly updated, and at least once every 28 days, in line with expectations. ***Hampshire Constabulary should ensure that it has a way of effectively monitoring compliance with the Victims' Code and ensure victims are regularly updated, at least once every 28 days in line with expectations.***

[Recommendation 9. Reviewing Legislative Frameworks for Victims of Grooming & Exploitation.](#)

The Law Commission must review the legislative framework around offences committed while a child or young person is being groomed/exploited to identify whether any appropriate changes to legislation could reduce the impact on their future life prospects. This should include both the availability of substantive defences and the potential to filter convictions which occurred in such circumstances during criminal records disclosure. ***Hampshire should remain up to date with any changes in the legislative framework that may affect young people who have committed offences whilst being groomed or exploited, to support the future life prospects of these individuals.***

[Recommendation 12. Collaboration to Identify Issues and Priorities](#)

The College of Policing and NPCC should work together to explore the creation of a forum to identify the major issues for policing, agree priorities for learning and development at a national level and provide leadership, advice and support to police forces. Such a forum would involve as a minimum the College of Policing, NPCC, IOPC and HMICFRS. Such an approach would also need to take into account the need for individual chief officers to make their own decisions about priorities taking into account local context and issues. ***Hampshire Constabulary should keep up to date with the national forum when it is created, and absorb the learning, advice and support this forum will produce.***

[Recommendation 13. Working with Partner Agencies.](#)

SYP must continue to improve processes that enable SYP and partner agencies to better collaborate so that information that should be available and considered by everyone is effectively shared, understood and acted upon in a timely fashion. This will help to encourage good practice and enable any issues or misunderstandings about the process to be corrected quickly. ***Hampshire Constabulary should explore its own processes to see if these can be improved to produce better collaboration and information sharing between the constabulary and partner agencies.***

# Child Sexual Exploitation by Organised Networks

The Home Secretary has made the decision for HMIC to undertake a review of all police forces in relation to CSE as a result of the Independent Inquiry into CSA report released February 2022 pertaining to CSE by organised networks, so is wider than Op Linden, which was focused specifically on these issues in Rotherham, but clearly with a good degree of overlap. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

6 case study areas were taken from Durham, Swansea, Warwick, St Helens, Tower Hamlets and Bristol for the IICSA report. IICSA noted the following, which acted as the catalyst for the Home Secretary to make the commission for the wider thematic inspection:

***“In keeping with the wider picture described above, the Inquiry did not receive a reliable picture of child sexual exploitation from the six case study areas that provided data. The data presented were confused and confusing. There were inconsistencies in each case study area, with unexplained trends and in some cases large, unexplained variations in the figures. The data indicated that cases of child sexual exploitation were falling in two case study areas. Reductions in exploitation may in part be related to changes in local recording practices. It is hard to reconcile the idea that child sexual exploitation by networks is now less prevalent with the widely reported ‘explosion’ in online child sexual abuse, including exploitation. As the Inquiry has heard in other investigations, some of the worst examples include where children – including babies and infants – are live streamed for money, sometimes being sexually abused at the direction of the paying perpetrator. It is more important than ever that the relevant agencies in every area should have a specific focus on what is known about child sexual exploitation, distinct from child criminal exploitation, whether or not the agencies adopt the child criminal exploitation model.”*** *“there were examples of child sexual exploitation by groups in the evidence seen by the Inquiry which should have been identified by the police. South Wales Police acknowledged “there is a likelihood that there are organised criminal networks that we haven’t discovered”. The local authority in Tower Hamlets also informed the Inquiry it had not identified any cases of sexual exploitation by networks, applying the definition of an organised criminal group, but then acknowledged that “just because we haven’t seen it doesn’t mean to say it’s not there”.*”

# Child Sexual Exploitation by Organised Networks

Recommendations arising from this report include:

- ◇ the strengthening of the response of the criminal justice system by the government amending the Sentencing Act 2020 to provide a mandatory aggravating factor in sentencing those convicted of offences relating to the sexual exploitation of children.
- ◇ the government should publish an enhanced version of its Child Exploitation Disruption Toolkit as soon as possible.
- ◇ Department for Education and the Welsh Government should update guidance on child sexual exploitation. This should include the identification and response to child sexual exploitation perpetrated by networks or groups and improve the categorisation of risk and harm by local authorities and other 7 Executive Summary institutions.
- ◇ The Department for Education should, without delay, ban the placement in semi-independent and independent settings of children aged 16 and 17 who have experienced, or are at heightened risk of experiencing, sexual exploitation.

The overarching questions to be determined during the thematic inspection will be **how effective is the police and law enforcement response to victims and perpetrators of group-based child sexual exploitation (CSE)?, And how do those responses influence investigations and the safeguarding of children?**

Inspection questions to be covered include:

1. How well do the police understand the nature and scale of CSE by groups of perpetrators both locally and nationally?
2. How well do the police identify that CSE is group-based, and how far are they identifying other offenders / victims?
3. How effective are police problem profiling, including collecting and sharing of data on the characteristics of CSE offenders?
4. How effective is the police response when children are identified as victims of group-based sexual exploitation or reported to be at risk of such exploitation?
5. How effective are the police at preventing children becoming victims of group based sexual exploitation?
6. How do police engage with children (specifically victims of these offences) to ensure their voices are heard?



## Child Trafficking —The Story of Mo Farah

The recent documentary around Mo Farah being trafficked—tilted ‘The Real Mo Farah’ - has brought into stark reality the issues of child trafficking into the UK. Mo was just nine years old when he was trafficked into the UK and forced into domestic servitude. This throws up a wider conversation about the risk of all forms of exploitation to vulnerable children and the signs that we all need to be alerted to.

Like everywhere in the country, we know that trafficking and modern-day slavery are happening in Hampshire. It is often a hidden crime and involves adults as well as children. There are some differences between child trafficking locally and what we see around separated and trafficked children from other countries but the mechanisms around grooming and exploitation are similar.



We have seen a rise in cases being reported over recent years and this is partly due to a much greater awareness of these issues in the general public and amongst professional staff. Our exploitation specialist teams have been really instrumental in raising the profile of modern-day slavery and trafficking with all our partner agencies.

This form of abuse is illegal and has a lifelong impact on victims. There is a lot happening behind the scenes but we rely on you to know the signs and act on your concerns appropriately.

**If you spot the signs then speak out..!**

It's easy to raise concerns on our website - even if you're not sure, your report could make all the difference to a child's future: [Report child abuse | Children and Families | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/child-abuse-reporting)

**Remember—if you are concerned a child is at risk of harm please refer to the Children's Services Department in your local authority area.**

## Launch of the Summer Safety Campaign

The 'Summer Safety' campaign has now been launched. Interactive quizzes and exercises around the topics discussed below can be accessed [here](#).

**Summer is for ice creams, hanging out with friends and family, being around water and having lots of fun!** We have the opportunity to do so much more in the summer holidays, here's how to keep yourself and your friends safe this summer.



### **Tombstoning**

It seems like loads of fun jumping into the water, and the perfect way to cool down, however strong currents and hidden rocks can be lurking unseen and the shock of cold water may make swimming and breathing difficult. Why not try your local lido instead as many have diving boards – who knows you could be the next Tom Daly?!

### **Drinking**

We all know that we need to drink plenty of fluids when its hot to stop us dehydrating. Lounging in the hot sun with a cool, alcoholic drink might seem like the perfect solution. However, drinking alcohol will actually dehydrate you further because it causes you to urinate and perspire more than normal. Find out more about why the sun and alcohol don't mix:

### **Personal Safety**

Summer's perfect for being out with friends, here's a few tips to keep that summer vibe going:

- Keep your mobile charged
- Let someone know where you are going
- Stay with friends
- Work out how you are going to get home in advance
- If you're near water keep an eye on the tide in case you get cut off
- Keep aware, alcohol and drugs impact on your health and body

### **Healthy relationships**

Over the summer break we spend a lot more time with family, friends and partners but this can be a source of tension as well as pleasure! Do you know when a relationship is just being tested and when it is unhealthy?

### **Don't forget to stay safe online too**

From summer selfies to gaming marathons, being online will no doubt be part of the summer fun and it is equally important to be aware of how to stay safe online as it is when out and about.