

Safeguarding Newsletter



Summer Term 2023

At Alverton Primary School, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and of utmost priority.

The aim of our termly safeguarding newsletter is to communicate key information to parents concerning safeguarding and how as a school we aim to keep you informed to actively promote the safeguarding and welfare of all our pupils. We try to have a different focus each term to provide information that is helpful for our parents about situations that their children might face now or in the future.

You can find further safeguarding information in the Safeguarding section of our website, including all our previous Safeguarding newsletters which contain a range of safeguarding information.

<http://www.alverton.org.uk/website/safeguarding/85998> , http://www.alverton.org.uk/web/safeguarding_newsletters_for_parents/652398 and http://www.alverton.org.uk/web/staying_safe_online_who_can_help/550827

Child Criminal Exploitation

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and can range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can happen online, offline, or both. Initial contact can be made via social media and victims can be groomed similarly to sexual exploitation.

Young people can be criminally exploited by an adult or a peer. The relationship is an unequal power imbalance that involves an exchange for tangible rewards (money, drugs or clothes etc) or intangible rewards (status, protection or perceived friendship).

CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into shoplifting, pickpocketing, or committing vehicle crime or serious violence. Children involved in criminal exploitation may also be at higher risk of sexual exploitation. Older children are more likely to be targeted but children in primary school have been targeted too.

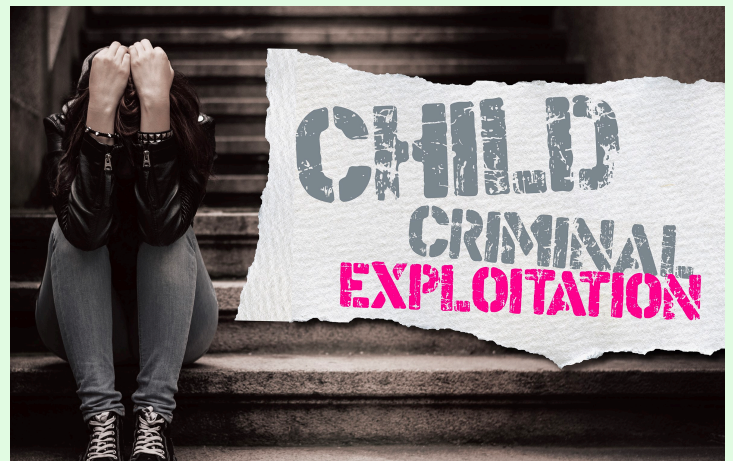
Although it may appear that children are choosing to participate in crime, they are being exploited, and potentially physically and sexually abused, and so are still victims. Once involved, they're often intimidated into staying through the threat of violence against them and their families, or by 'drug Child Criminal Exploitation debts'.

This is a primary school. Surely we don't need to worry?

Although the most common age range is older, children as young as 7 or 8 are increasingly being targeted. They are often targeted for a specific vulnerability and then groomed to be "useful" to the gang in their early teens.

Isn't it the child's fault if they're committing a crime?

No. Whatever the age of the child, whatever the circumstances, **they are being exploited.**



County Lines

The most well-known form of CCE is 'County Lines', where children are exploited into transporting and selling drugs.

What is County Lines?

- A child is groomed by a criminal gang, then exploited to transport drugs and money from one area (county) to another – usually from an urban location to a rural or coastal one
- The child may be trafficked to the gang's 'trap houses' miles away from home, to find 'customers', deal with rival gangs and sell drugs
- To the gang, the child is an expendable commodity. They're likely to face violence and sexual exploitation
- The 'line' refers to the phone line that the gang uses for selling drugs

This is the main model now, but gangs are changing their approach as the police become more aware of their methods.

All children are vulnerable to this type of exploitation though some are known to be at greater risk. Gangs are constantly changing their model and targeting different children to try to avoid being caught.

Please take a few minutes to watch this video about County Lines. <https://vimeo.com/387807280/535ed46d8f> Although is aimed at people working in education, is equally valid for parents.

County lines gangs use children and vulnerable people to courier drugs and money. A young person who is involved in county lines activity might exhibit some of these signs:

 Persistently going missing from school or home, or being found out-of-area	 Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phones	 excessive receipt of texts or phone calls	 Relationships with controlling, older individuals or gang association	 Leaving home or care without explanation
 Suspicion of self-harm, physical assault or unexplained injuries	 Parental concerns	 Significant decline in school performance	 Significant changes in emotional well-being	

Who can I talk to if I am worried about a child?

If you see it, hear it or know about it - report it!
This could be a child being neglected or any other kind of abuse.
Remember - safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Mr Higgs is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Alverton School and **Mrs Wicks** is the Deputy DSL. They will always be willing to listen to any concerns you may have.

If they are not available, Mrs Clemens, Mr Dawe, Mrs Daylak, Mrs Hughes, Mrs O'Neill, Mrs O'Rourke and Mrs Simpson have all received additional safeguarding training and will be able to help you.

01736 364087

Cornwall Multi-Agency Referral Unit
0300 123 1116

NSPCC 
HELPLINE
0808 800 5000
help@nspcc.org.uk

ChildLine
0800 111 