

**Safeguarding Children Partnership  
London Borough of Hillingdon  
The Operational High-Risk Panel Procedure  
(HRP)  
April 2021  
High Risk Panel Procedure**

## **1.0 Purpose of the Operational High-Risk Panel**

- To provide a comprehensive approach and an effective mechanism to tackling issues of extra-familial harm/abuse (county lines, child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, serious youth violence and trafficking) of or by children and young people across the Hillingdon Area.
- To ensure a consistent approach is taken across agencies when considering the vulnerability level of individual young people.
- To provide strategic and operational oversight for children at risk of all forms of child exploitation that will assist front line staff to evidence their decision making in respect of individual young people deemed to be at risk and ensure decisions are made that are defensible to external scrutiny;
- To promote partnership working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in effectively tackling exploitation, vulnerability, and risk.
- To disrupt and prevent all forms of child exploitation and harm through coordinating information sharing and multi-agency intervention, understand locations of concern, the context, identify persons of concern as well as develop plans across the Partnership to address these issues (Bigger Picture approach).

To report and update the Strategic High-Risk panel regarding themes, trends and issues that will inform strategic development of services and approaches

## **2.0 Scope**

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all staff within Children and Young People's Service and other agencies who are working directly or indirectly with children, young people, and their families.
- 2.2 The Operational High-Risk Panel (called in this document High-Risk Panel) does not case manage individual cases but should identify, discuss, and deliver a partnership response to short, medium and long-term themes, trends and patterns emerging from Child Criminal Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation, Serious Youth Violence and other related extra-familial risk factors.
- 2.3 All cases must have followed existing child protection procedures prior to being discussed at the HRP, must have been subject to a strategy meeting/discussion and

should have a corresponding police CSE/CCE CRIS number for the young person save for exceptional circumstances which will be agreed by the co-chairs of the HRP.

- 2.4. No agency should delay action against referrals whilst waiting for a discussion at the next High-Risk Panel meeting. Action to protect children from Exploitation and Abuse should be a priority for all agencies and the High-Risk Panel meeting serves as a mechanism to ensure that activity is taking place and is co-ordinated and the trends and themes are identified.
- 2.5. If an agency does not feel that a case is progressing, it should escalate the matter in accordance with the Safeguarding Children Partnership escalation process for resolution of professional disagreements, and this should be reported to the HRP.

### 3.0 Introduction

- 3.1 This procedure sets out the process that should be used when individual agencies become concerned that a young person's behaviour is increasing their vulnerability.
- 3.2 The procedure will be reviewed every 18 months against its purpose This procedure will be reviewed in February 2023
- 3.3 updates to this procedure are possible as identified by the High-Risk Panel, Strategic High-Risk Panel or the Children Safeguarding Partnership Board
- 3.4 This procedure has been aligned the provisions of the Pan London Child Exploitation Protocol 2021

### 4.0 Identifying and rating concerns.

- 4.1 If a practitioner in a universal setting has a concern about the welfare of a young person, they should utilise the Stronger Families pathway to assess the needs and determine the most appropriate service. (Stronger Families - Hillingdon Council)
- 4.2 The Vulnerability Checklist (Appendix 1) should be used to inform an assessment at any stage where the child's behaviour appears to be a risk concern.
- 4.3 Using the following matrix the worker should, on the basis of their assessment, identify the level of vulnerability of the child or young person.
- 4.4 If any further information becomes known to the Lead Professional following the initial risk assessment, the level of vulnerability should be reviewed.

Level of Vulnerability	Threshold	Action	Lead
Low	No evidence at present to indicate likelihood of serious harmful behaviour at this time.	The risk assessment documentation (Vulnerability checklist) should be countersigned by the line manager. and the document placed on	Lead Professional

	No further action required.	the young person's case file	
Medium	Some risk identified but consequences not likely to result in imminent serious or significant harm. This risk should be managed through the existing intervention plan and agreed actions recorded on the young person's case file.	The risk assessment is discussed with the line manager within 5 working days. Actions identified to manage or moderate the level of risk should be included within the Early Help Plan or any other professional plan e.g. YJS or CIN plan.	Lead Professional/ social worker/ YJS officer/ key worker
High/ Very High	<p>The risk of significant harm arising as a result or consequence of the identified behaviour</p> <p>(s) Could occur at any time.</p> <p>The risk of serious or significant harm is imminent and the young person will commit the behaviour (s) as soon as they are able, or the opportunity arises.</p> <p>Immediate action is required and will involve intensive multi agency support and/or surveillance.</p>	<p>The risk assessment should be discussed with the line manager that day. If not already open to tier 4 service e.g. YJS/CSC to refer to CSC in order to convene a multi-agency strategy meeting within 5 working days. The Vulnerability Checklist must be commenced during this period and completed by all parties at the multi-agency strategy meeting.</p> <p>This strategy meeting must be chaired by a Manager, and minutes including the actions to moderate the immediate risk with timescales, recorded.</p> <p>A referral must be made without delay to the High-Risk Panel). The completed Vulnerability Checklist is used as the referral document.</p>	Lead Professional/ Social Worker/YJS Officer/ Line Manager

4.5 If there are any doubts about the assessed vulnerability level these can be discussed with CSC.

**4.6 If the child/young person is at risk of significant harm due to abuse or neglect, then Child Protection Procedures MUST be followed.**

## **5.0 The High-Risk Panel (HRP)**

5.1 The High-Risk Panel (HRP) will review cases exhibiting the following vulnerabilities identified through the Vulnerability Checklist as High or Very High risk including -

- Young people who go missing.
- Young people at risk of sexual exploitation.
- Young people at risk of radicalisation.
- Young people at risk through serious youth violence/gang membership.
- Young people at risk of involvement in drug supply offences, including county lines.
- Young people engaged in sexually harmful behaviour.
- Young People at Risk of Child Trafficking

**Important Note:** Not all cases referred to the HRP will be considered for discussion however there will be a review of the referral and a threshold discussion at the pre-HRP meeting to determine eligibility. A pre-High-Risk Panel meeting is convened by the selected core group (or delegated members) of the panel to review referrals and agree on the cases to be discussed on the next panel. The pre-High-Risk Panel core group will decide to determine intervention appropriate for cases that do not meet criteria for the HRP. The core group of the pre HRP is comprised of the following members: Children's Social Care, Exploitation Team Police, Rescue and Response, Youth Justice Service, AXIS and Health.

**For Terms of Reference see Appendix 2.**

5.2 As the HRP fulfils the functions of the Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) Meeting it must be co-chaired by:

Head of Service Children in Need of Help and Protection LBH and Metropolitan Police Detective Inspector or above.

5.3 The referral to the Panel will be via the submission of the completed Vulnerability Checklist to the Head of Service with a copy sent to the relevant Head of Service (line management). This submission has to happen 7 working days before the HRP date unless it is an emergency.

5.4 The Lead Professional will be expected to attend the meeting to advise on existing risk management activity.

5.5 The forum will consider the circumstances and plans of all young people referred and will maintain a central High-Risk Log.

5.6 Young people will be included on this High-Risk Log if the assessment of the multi-agency High Risk Panel Group concurs with that of the lead professional.

5.6 A multi-agency Risk Management Plan will be maintained for all young people whose names appear on the High-Risk Log. This plan will identify -

- The support services that will be or are being provided to the young person to manage the identified risks.

- Other agency activities identified to disrupt the behaviour of others who may be a key component of and contributing to the risk (see Appendix 3 for potential disruption activities).
  - Timescales for actions.
- 5.7 A copy of the Risk Management Plan will be provided to all agencies identified as providing support and the plan will be reviewed on a monthly basis until the young person is no longer considered to be at high or very high risk.
- 5.8 The Risk Management Plan is not intended to replace any action which an individual agency may consider necessary to safeguard and protect the welfare of a child or young person. Rather, the plan is intended to enhance the planning process in respect of individual children and ensure coordinated multi-agency planning is in place.
- 5.9 The Risk Management Plan should be included on the child or young person's case file.
- 5.10 The High-Risk Log will be maintained by the Chair who will keep the information in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.
- 5.11 The High-Risk Panel Group will seek confirmation from local authorities who place young people in Hillingdon where there is deemed to be a risk to self or others that appropriate risk management strategies are in place.

Appendix 1 - Vulnerability Checklist- attached separately.

Appendix 2 - Terms of Reference High Risk Panel Group Meeting

Appendix 3 - Disruptive and Preventive Activities than can be considered by the Hillingdon High Risk Panel

Appendix 4 - Quick Reference Process Guide

## **Appendix 1- Attached Separately**

## **Appendix 2**

### **Hillingdon High Risk Panel (HRP)**

#### **Terms of Reference**

#### **1. FOCUS**

- 1.1 Vulnerable young people who are at risk of contextual safeguarding factors and/or who present a risk to self/ to others or are at risk from others.
- 1.2 Vulnerabilities which fall within the remit of this forum include:
- Young people who go missing
  - Young people at risk of sexual exploitation
  - Young people at risk of radicalisation
  - Young people at risk through serious youth violence/gang membership

- Young people at risk of involvement in drug supply offences, including county lines (CCE).
- Young people engaged in sexually harmful behaviour
- Children at risk of modern slavery

## **2. PURPOSE**

- 2.1 To consider cases where the assessed risk to/from a young person is deemed to be **high or very high and a multi-agency plan is required** to reduce/manage that risk.
- 2.2 To ensure all possible powers and options available to agencies are being utilised to protect young people and disrupt the activities of those who may exploit them.
- 2.3 To review the multi-agency plans until such time as the assessed risk is reduced to medium or below.
- 2.4 To ensure young people Looked After (LAC) to other authorities - who are deemed to be a risk to self or others and who live in private and voluntary establishments within Hillingdon have appropriate risk management strategies in place.
- 2.5 To review available information and intelligence to identify patterns of risk requiring a tactical response, for example:
- Cross border issues.
  - Problem locations and trends.
  - Vulnerable groups.
- 2.6 The forum is not intended to replace individual agency procedures or replace other actions that workers may take to safeguard young people. Rather it is to facilitate multi agency working to maximum effect in reducing risk.
- 2.7 To collate themes and trends regarding the High-Risk issues in Hillingdon and update the Strategic High-Risk Panel on quarterly basis.

## **3.0 GOVERNANCE**

- 3.1 Through a quarterly briefing, the High-Risk Panel will provide information to the Hillingdon's Strategic High-Risk Panel on the following -
- Patterns and trends of those vulnerabilities affecting local children - CSE/violence/drug supply offences/sexually harmful behaviour/missing levels/radicalisation which may require a tactical or strategic response.
  - Numbers of young people for whom an integrated intervention plan has been developed and is being delivered.
  - Impact of interventions delivered - i.e. numbers for whom assessed risk is reduced.
  - Communities most affected, to allow awareness raising and targeted intervention and prevention.

## **4.0 WORKING ARRANGEMENTS**

#### 4.1 Chairperson

Shared chairing arrangements between -

- Children's Services - Head of Service, Children in Need of Help and Protection and;
- Metropolitan Police - Detective Inspector or above.

#### 4.2 Core Membership

Agencies/Service	Seniority
LBH Head of Service for Children in Need of Help and Protection	Head of Service (Co-Chair)
Police	Detective Inspector (Co-Chair)
Youth Justice Service	Operational Manager
LBH Axis Project	Senior Youth Crime Network Practitioner or above
LBH Targeted Programmes	Service Manager (Can delegate)
LBH Key Working Service	Service Manager (Can delegate)
MPS Missing Persons Unit	Team Leader (Can Delegate)
MPS CSE Unit Hillingdon	Detective Sergeant (Can Delegate)
MPS CSE Unit Central	Detective Sergeant (Can Delegate)
MPS Gangs Unit (Hillingdon)	Detective Sergeant (Can delegate)
MPS Specialist Crime (SPOC)	Detective Sergeant (Can delegate) only upon request by the Chair
Young People's Academy /Skills Hub	Head teacher/Safeguarding Lead
Hillingdon Association of Secondary Heads	Nominated Head teacher
CNWL	Safeguarding Children Team

Forensic CAMHS	Designated Officer
Rescue and Response	Rescue and Response Partnership Co-ordinator – West London
London Gang Exit (Safer London)	Coordinator
Probation	Gangs lead
Community Safety	Service Manager
LBH Children's Social Care	Head of Service
Housing Support	Housing Manager
SAFE Project	Lead Project Worker
ARCH/SORTED	Manager
P3 Charity	Manager

- 4.3** Core members of the group are to be of a sufficient managerial level within their own organisation as to be able to commit resources and make decisions. They will provide a deputy in the event they are unable to attend the meeting. This has to be notified to the chair ahead of the meeting.
- 4.4** The core membership of the group will be reviewed periodically to ensure it includes the correct agencies at the right managerial level.
- 4.5** The lead professional for a case will be expected to attend the meeting to advise on existing risk management activity.
- 4.6** Additional attendees may be invited as and when required for specific cases/issues.
- 4.7** **Meeting details** - The HRP meeting will take place every month at the Hillingdon Civic Centre/Though virtual means as circumstances permit. Each meeting will be scheduled for two hours however the length of the panel meeting will be dictated by the number of young people to be discussed.
- 4.8** **Administrative arrangements** – the meetings will be co-ordinated/minuted by the Business Support Unit, London Borough of Hillingdon.
- 4.9** All documents prepared for and resulting from the meeting are confidential and should not be shared without the permission of the Chair. Please refer to the attached Confidentiality Statement.

## **5.0 FUNCTIONS**



- 5.1 The High Risk Panel will consider cases referred by any agency where the Vulnerability Checklist has been completed and the assessed risk level is high or very high subject to review by the pre High-Risk Panel core group and reasons will be provided to the referrer if the case is not considered.
- 5.2 A 'High Risk Log' will be maintained where the assessment of the High-Risk Panel concurs with that of the individual agency's risk assessment. This High-Risk Log will be maintained by the Chair in line with Data Protection regulations and guidance.
- 5.3 A multi-agency Risk Management Plan will be maintained for all young people whose names appear on the High-Risk Log.
- 5.4 The multi-agency Risk Management Plan will identify the support services that are being provided to manage the identified risks, plus any additional activity identified at the meeting with timescales and ownership for delivery.
- 5.5 The multi-agency Risk Management Plan does not replace any action which an individual agency may consider necessary to safeguard a young person. Rather it is intended to enhance existing plans and support coordinated multi agency and tactical planning
- 5.6 A copy of the Risk Management Plan will be provided to all agencies identified as providing support.
- 5.7 The Risk Management Plan will be reviewed on a monthly basis until the young person is no longer deemed to be at high or very high risk.
- 5.8 The Risk Management Plan should be included on the child or young person's case file, by all agencies that have an active role with the young person.
- 6.0 **Escalation Process**
- 6.1 Where an agreement cannot be reached with respect to actions required by an agency, the matter will be escalated in the first instance to the Director (Children's Social Care) and Detective Superintendent for Public Protection - West Area BCU (MPS).

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Disruptive and Preventive Activities than can be considered by the High Risk Panel**

1. Has the child/victim got a Police National Computer report on indicating they are at risk
2. Has the suspected perpetrator got a PNC report indicating they pose a risk?
3. Have abduction warning notices been considered and if so served/recorded and everyone made aware.
4. Who is the lead agency/individual responsible for de-briefing the child following missing episodes is this being done and is the information being shared (including with the Axis

Project) Please refer to the Hillingdon missing Persons Protocol for further guidance on this.

5. Is there a forensic strategy in place around the child/victim i.e. has there been discussion around the recovery of the child's clothing following missing episodes or contact with suspected perpetrators.
6. Have civil orders been considered e.g. Sexual Harm Prevention Orders, Sexual Risk Orders, Child Abduction Warning Notices, Anti-social Behaviour Orders and High Court Injunctions.
7. Is any other legislation relevant e.g. harassment act.
8. Does the child have a phone that has a tracker on and if so, who has permission to track this?
9. Are all the people relevant to the child aware of the risk that they face i.e. consider disclosure to relevant people.
10. Is residential accommodation a possibility and if so, have the police provided evidence to support this?
11. Have any suspect vehicles been considered for Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) to provide information on the following:
  - Activity outside children's homes or other venues.
  - Vehicles used to transport victims between towns (CSE, CCE).
  - Vehicles roaming the streets looking for children.
12. Have CCTV staff been briefed to look for activity as under ANPR above?
13. Briefing sheets - Consider circulating pictures and details of potential victims and perpetrators along with vehicle details to all relevant people including Police, Local Wardens, other enforcement staff, CCTV operators etc.
14. Covert tactics where appropriate.
15. DNA and other forensic examination - should be considered when there is some evidence that sexual activity has taken place. Items of clothing etc. should be seized and locations forensically examined even when a complaint is made. If you believe a child is at risk of sexual exploitation, a volunteer DNA sample can be taken and submitted for inclusion on the Vulnerable Person DNA database (VPDD). The DNA Bureau will seek authority from the DNA Strategy Board to use this sample for elimination purposes in all CSE cases where the donor is the suspected victim.

16. Where a child continually goes missing from care, have arrangements been made for the prompt recovery of evidence where sexual offences are suspected to have taken place. Taking possession of mobile telephones and clothing could be crucial to the success of any future victimless prosecution.
17. Financial Investigation - may assist in locating vulnerable children missing from home. If you suspect that children are being trafficked for sex and the perpetrators are profiting financially, you should liaise with financial investigators and agree an investigation strategy. This may also be relevant where the perpetrator is also believed to be involved in drug offences. Financial transactions may reveal spending information e.g. hotel stays that can be followed up or identify evidence of benefit fraud, for which suspected perpetrators can be prosecuted.
18. Home visits - if it is believed that potential victims are frequenting a suspected perpetrator's address, particularly where an abduction warning has been given, it may be appropriate to arrange regular visits to the perpetrator's home address to ensure that children at risk are not present, and to reinforce previous advice.
19. Hotels - where CSE perpetrators frequent hotels and the management are failing to prevent this, consider liaising with Trading Standards regarding compliance with legislation. Other options include:
  - Routine high visibility visits
  - Meeting with area and regional management
  - Using abduction warnings for management and staff
  - Seizing of CCTV and guest registers
  - Forensic examination of rooms
  - Obtaining payment details used by perpetrators
  - Covert observations
  - Sections 14 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 may apply if hotel staff allow perpetrators to rent rooms in return for money and in the knowledge that they intend to commit such an offence.
20. Parks and Town Centres - can be the location of initial contact between victim and perpetrator; sexual offences or drug exchange. If a particular park or location is identified, consider:
  - Briefing PCSO and neighbourhood policing teams and high visibility patrols.
  - Briefing relevant staff from other agencies (Local Authority, Security Guards etc).
  - Using CCTV and briefing CCTV Operators.
  - Covert observations.
21. Takeaways and taxi firms - are frequently linked to CSE incidents and drug movement (county lines). If the staff/proprietors are uncooperative, consider:
  - Briefing PCSO, neighbourhood and high visibility patrols at relevant times.
  - Using child abduction warning notices.
  - Prosecuting regarding Child Abduction Offences or section 14 (Sexual Offences Act 2003) Offences.
  - Covert surveillance, potentially also including mobile surveillance.
  - Liaising with Local Authority Licensing and Trading Standards to visit premises of concerns or with a view to revoking licences.
  - Liaising with the Department of Work and Pensions and UK Border Agency regarding illegal employees.

- Consider Closure Orders.
22. Children's Homes - Some perpetrators and those operating drug distribution lines will park vehicles near to homes and are always likely to contact the victim by phone to arrange meetings. Consider:
    - Ensuring the home is recording patterns of unauthorised absence incidents (not reported to the Police) and that the police are being updated.
    - Preparing a Police Children's Services Action Plan, agreeing joint actions for when the potential victim go missing.
    - Briefing care staff regarding identities, photos and vehicle details of potential perpetrators and collating and analysing intelligence from care home staff regarding incidents, e.g. details of vehicles seen etc.
    - High visibility patrols at relevant times.
    - Covert observations.
    - Consider moving the victim to new accommodation to prevent contact and break-up groups of victims who may go missing together.
    - Collect potential sources of evidence from home staff, e.g. mobile phone lists and clothing when the victim returns, and it is believed that sexual activity has taken place.
  23. Schools may be identified as having particular issues in connection with CSE because one child has been targeted and is drawing friends into the abuse or because perpetrators may live locally or have attended the school themselves. You may wish to consider:
    - Briefing school staff with identities, photos and vehicles details of potential perpetrators.
    - Collating and analysing intelligence from staff regarding incidents.
    - School staff recording unauthorised absence incidents.
    - Talk to pupils about CSE issues and utilise high visibility patrols at relevant times.
    - Covert observations with the school as a "pick-up point".
  24. Immigration Status - If it is believed the perpetrator maybe a recent arrival in the UK, enquiries should be made with UKBA to establish immigration status.
  25. MAPPA referral - if the appropriate criteria are met, the perpetrator could be managed as a MAPPA case. If Probation is not involved it may still be possible to nominate an individual as a Potentially Dangerous Person (PDP) in order for a Superintendent to authorise multi-agency involvement, third party disclosures and inclusion on VISOR.
  26. Targeting other offences - perpetrators could be disrupted if targeted for other offences including monitoring or Public Order Offences.
  27. Technology - Wherever possible Section 18 PACE searches of the perpetrators premises and vehicles should be conducted to secure and preserve relevant evidence including mobile phones, computers, and other data storage devices. Patterns of phone calls may disclose evidential material of value, particularly if a victim's absences from a care home coincide with the receipt of calls from a particular number.

28. Facebook and social media - Although CSE Victims typically only allow access to identified “friends”, accessing Social Media sites may still disclose some information. You may wish to consider gaining the appropriate authority to secure further access.
29. Search Warrants - The information shared at the VYPRMG may be sufficient for consideration of a search warrant being obtained for the home address of the suspected perpetrator. The types of warrant utilised include:
  - PACE warrants searching for relevant evidence.
  - Section 50 of the Children’s Act allows entry and search where there is reason to believe that a child that is subject of a Care Order, Emergency Protection or Police Protection Order is being held in circumstances amounting to an offence under Section 49 of this act (keep away a child without lawful authority).
  - Misuse of Drugs Act, as there is a strong link between drug dealing and men engaged in CSE.

Appendix 4

## Vulnerability Risk Management Procedure

