

Non-Recent, Organised and Complex Abuse Procedures

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1. Background

This procedure relates to the disclosure of non-recent child abuse, organised and/or complex child abuse and provides information to agencies about what action they should take if they suspect such child abuse.

All agencies, including those from the voluntary and community sector, who may be asked to contribute to such investigations, need to ensure that they follow this procedure.

These procedures must be implemented in conjunction with other relevant NYSCB procedures in relation to safeguarding children and where appropriate the NYSCB Managing Allegations Against Staff Procedure.

Effective implementation requires robust multi-agency and partnership arrangements and as such the procedure and operational use of it will have oversight and scrutiny from the NYSCB.

2. Aim of the Procedure

The aim of the procedure is:

1. To signpost to the most relevant national and local guidance and strategies.

2. To provide clarity on the procedure that should to be followed when a relevant concern is identified; and
3. To provide information on the local arrangements in place.

3. Non-Recent Abuse Disclosures

Disclosures of child abuse are sometimes made by adults and young people a period of time after the abuse has occurred. For the purposes of this procedure non-recent abuse is determined as where the reported abuse occurred over one year before it was disclosed and/or reported.

There are many reasons for a disclosure not being made at the time and these include:

- Fear of reprisals
- Degree of control exercised by the abuser
- Fear of not being believed
- Not understanding until later that what they had experienced was abuse

As well as achieving some justice, support for the victim and ensuring current risk and safeguarding takes place, those dealing with cases of this nature should bear in mind that even though the offences are termed non-recent, the alleged perpetrator could be in current contact with children and young people as a parent, carer, worker or volunteer.

Consequently, responses to disclosures of non-recent abuse require as high a standard of response to any other reported abuse.

Wherever non-recent abuse enquiries involve more than one alleged perpetrator or more than one victim, the procedures for Organised and/or Complex abuse must be considered (see Section 4 below).

Whenever the alleged perpetrator has worked or currently works with children or young people and/or is employed by North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) in any capacity, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) must be notified and consulted. Guidance relating to managing allegations against staff can be located on the NYSCB website and accessed using the following link:

- <http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/admin/uploads/practice-guidance/managing-allegations-against-staff.pdf>).

3.1 Non-Recent Abuse Disclosures from a Child or Young Person

Any non-recent abuse disclosure from a child or young person must be treated as if it is recent in terms of appropriate response to the child and their needs and NYSCB Child Protection Procedures followed. The risk assessment of such information should also consider the identification of other children who may be at risk and the same principles apply.

If it is unclear whether a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, discussions should be held with your agency's child protection advisor and or with the NYCC Customer Resolution Centre.

Effective sharing of information between professionals and local agencies is essential for effective identification, assessment and service provision. Anyone who has concerns about a child's welfare should make a referral to Children's Social Care. Referrals will NOT be accepted through any other route.

The referral form for a referral to NYCC Customer Resolution Centre is available through the NYSCB website and can be accessed using the following link:

- <http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/forms-for-professionals>

Further details relating to thresholds and the referral procedure can be found in the Vulnerability Checklist on the NYSCB website and using the following links:

- <http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/vulnerability-checklist>
- <http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/admin/uploads/practice-guidance/managing-allegations-against-staff.pdf>

3.2 Non-Recent Abuse Disclosure from an Adult

When an adult makes a disclosure to a professional that he or she has suffered abuse as a child, the professional to whom the disclosure is made should:

- Clarify whether there is a child or children who is/are currently at risk from the alleged perpetrator
- Ascertain whether the adult is aware of the alleged perpetrator's recent or current whereabouts and any contact the alleged perpetrator may have with children
- Advise the adult to make a formal complaint to the police, explaining that there is a significant likelihood that a person who has previously abused a child will have continued and may still be doing so
- Offer the adult support in making a formal complaint to the police
- Provide information about relevant support services

Where there are concerns that the disclosure highlights an on-going risk to a child or children then appropriate action should be taken by the professional to safeguard children including contact with relevant agencies (see Section 3.1 above).

Where it is believed that the alleged perpetrator has contact with a child or children a referral should be made to the NYCC Customer Resolution Centre (or relevant Local Authority if the risk to a child or children is out of the North Yorkshire area) so that information can be gathered and a decision can be made whether to apply child protection procedures in respect of the child or children with whom the alleged perpetrator has contact (see Section 3.1 above). If there is any

doubt regarding risk contact should be made with NYCC Customer Resolution Centre for advice and/or guidance.

Where an adult making a disclosure chooses not to make a formal complaint to the police, the adult should be advised of the possible risk to children. The adult should be advised that the information will be shared and a referral made to NYCC Customer Contact Centre (or relevant Local Authority if the risk to a child or children is out of the North Yorkshire area). If the adult wishes for his or her identify to remain anonymous this must be respected, however, they should also be asked if they would be willing to talk with a representative of NYCC Children's Social Care (CSC) to enable them to seek to safeguard any other children who may be at risk. If there is any doubt regarding risk contact should be made with NYCC Customer Resolution Centre for advice and/or guidance.

Where the professional remains concerned about issues in relation to consent and confidentiality he or she should liaise with his or her line manager or named person for Child Protection.

Further advice can be obtained using the following links:

- Forms for Professionals <http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/forms-for-professionals>
- Vulnerability Checklist <http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/vulnerability-checklist>
- Managing Allegations Against Staff <http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/managing-allegations-against-staff>

3.3 Required Response

When a disclosure of non-recent abuse is made the person receiving the information should record the discussion in detail. If possible, they should establish if the victim or referrer has any knowledge of the alleged perpetrator's recent or current whereabouts and whether there is any contact with children.

In view of the potential continuing risk that the alleged perpetrator may pose to children the person receiving the allegation or concern should make a referral to NYCC Customer Resolution Centre (see Section 3.1 above).

Where it is reported that the abuse in childhood took place in a different local authority the case should be referred to the Local Authority and/or Police Force in the area in which the abuse is reported to have taken place. Parallel enquiries may be needed if the alleged perpetrator has contact with children elsewhere, but the co-ordination of Local Authority Children's Social Care (CSC) response should be the Local Authority responsible for the geographical area where the abuse is alleged to have taken place.

If there is any doubt regarding this contact should be made with NYCC Customer Resolution Centre or North Yorkshire Police Vulnerable Assessment Team (VAT) who can provide advice and/or guidance.

Where the abuse is alleged to have taken place in a children's home, residential or boarding school, the Local Authority responsible for running the establishment concerned, irrespective of where the children's home, residential or boarding school is or was located, should be notified.

If the abuse is alleged to have taken place in a children's home, residential or boarding school within North Yorkshire the NYCC LADO team must be notified.

In some cases of delayed reporting of abuse, the responsibility for the running of an establishment may be unclear and in such cases the NYCC LADO team should be notified.

If there is any doubt regarding this, contact should be made with NYCC Customer Resolution Centre or North Yorkshire Police Vulnerable Assessment Team (VAT) who can provide advice and/or guidance.

It is important that there is effective communication about the roles and responsibilities between safeguarding partner agencies in such circumstances. NYCC and/or NYP must ensure that the details of any reported cases of non-recent abuse are communicated to the relevant statutory safeguarding partners within another local authority area who have the responsibility to progress the case and provide support to the victim and/or victims.

In view of the potential continuing risk the alleged perpetrator may pose to children, the person receiving the allegation or concern should make a referral to NYCC Customer Resolution Centre (or the relevant Local Authority if the risk to a child or children is out of the North Yorkshire area - see Section 3.1 above).

3.4 Local Authority Children's Social Care Responsibilities

Upon receipt of a report of non-recent abuse NYCC CYPS staff should:

- Inform North Yorkshire Police Vulnerable Assessment Team (VAT) or the relevant Police Force (if the alleged abuse has taken place out of North Yorkshire area) at the earliest opportunity and establish if there is any information regarding the alleged perpetrator's current contact with children (irrespective of the wishes of the alleged victim as to whether a police prosecution should take place)
- Inform the NYCC Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the alleged perpetrator worked or currently works with Children and/or Young People.
- Inform the NYCC CYPS Head of Safeguarding, Children and Families Service if the allegation indicates organised or complex abuse
- Help the victim identify appropriate therapeutic support (taking into account advice from NYP and/or CPS if there is a potential or on-going criminal investigation). The alleged victim may also be a vulnerable adult and access to and communication with specific services for vulnerable adults must be considered.

3.5 Police Force Responsibilities

The responsible Police Force for an investigation will be the force covering the area in which the alleged abuse is reported to have taken place.

If the alleged abuse has taken place in North Yorkshire contact should be made with North Yorkshire Police VAT team unless there is an urgent safeguarding risk when the matter should be reported using appropriate telephone numbers (999 or 101 service).

3.6 Transferrable Concerns for Vulnerable Adults

Consideration should be given to any transferrable risks to vulnerable adults particularly where the alleged perpetrator has moved to adult services or works within a service that covers both children and vulnerable adults (for example a hospital, voluntary and/or faith sector).

In such circumstances, NYCC Adult Social Care (or relevant LA Adult Social Care if the risk relates to vulnerable adults out of the North Yorkshire area) should be notified and included in the safeguarding and investigative process as well as any related assessment and therapeutic planning.

4 Organised and/or Complex Child Abuse Procedure

Organised and/or complex abuse may be defined as child abuse involving one or more perpetrators and a number of related or non-related children. The perpetrators may be acting in concert to abuse a child or children; one or more adults may be involved and they may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children from abuse.

Complex abuse occurs both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community and/or within institutions, such as residential settings, boarding schools, day care, faith groups, sports clubs and voluntary organisations. There will also be cases of children being abused through use of electronic devices, such as mobile phones, computers, games consoles etcetera which all access the Internet and through contact using social media platforms.

Although in most cases of complex and organised abuse the abuser(s) is an adult, it is also possible for children and young people to be the perpetrators of such harm, with or without adult abusers.

It is not unusual for complex abuse to emerge from a case already under investigation which was initially perceived as a non-complex case. These procedures will need to be applied as soon as the potential complexities of the case are recognised.

An investigation of organised and/or complex child abuse will be carried out under the auspices of the NYSCB and the NYSCB Board Manager should be kept informed of the progress. The lead agency will be North Yorkshire Police whilst any criminal investigation is taking place, guided by partner agencies regarding wider safeguarding and support matters.

4.1 General Principles

Cases of organised and/or complex child abuse are often complicated because of the number of victims involved; the serious nature of the allegations of the abuse; the need for therapeutic

input, the need for joint communication strategies and the complex and time consuming nature of any consequent legal proceedings.

The investigation requires thorough planning, good inter-agency working and attention to the welfare needs of the child or children that have been subject of harm. The various agencies involved in any complex abuse investigation should be committed to working together in partnership to ensure that relevant information is shared and that appropriate action is taken to minimise the risk posed by alleged perpetrators to children and vulnerable adults.

Such cases may require the formation of dedicated teams of professionals consisting of safeguarding specialists predominately from North Yorkshire Police, North Yorkshire County Council CYPS Children's and Families Service and relevant Health Professionals, for the purpose of the investigation. However, other specialist safeguarding professionals may be called upon to support any investigation by inclusion in the formation of a dedicated team or as required.

It is recognised that those who commit sexual offences against children often operate across geographical and operational boundaries and these procedures include the potential involvement of more than one Local Authority, Police Force and Health Authority area.

Some investigations become extremely complex because of the seriousness of the case, the number of places and people involved, and the timescale over which abuse is alleged to have occurred. In these circumstances a specialist Investigation Management Group (see **Section 7, The Investigation Management Group**), as well as a Strategic Management Group (see **Section 6, The Strategic Management Group**) may be set up.

Where professionals are implicated as suspected perpetrators of abuse, it is imperative that direct line managers are not represented in either the Strategic Management Group or the Investigation Team. An early mapping exercise to determine the scale of the investigation should help to identify such circumstances.

In all investigations of organised and/or complex child abuse it is essential that staff involved maintain a high level of confidentiality in relation to the information in their possession without jeopardising the investigation or the welfare of the victims involved. Subsequent information generated throughout the investigation will only be shared on a need to know basis.

These procedures must be implemented in conjunction with the Managing Allegations Against Professionals Procedure and can be located on the NYSCB website and using the following link:

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/managing-allegations-against-staff>

The protection of any child or children identified as being at risk of harm remains paramount, but the sharing of information and confidentiality issues should also be treated with due consideration in relation to the alleged perpetrator(s).

Complex child abuse investigations should be undertaken as a joint operation between North Yorkshire Police, NYCC CYPS and where relevant the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) who should be involved at an early stage to provide advice. Investigation teams should have visible

support from senior managers within organisations throughout the inquiry. This requires the involvement of senior personnel of at least Assistant Chief Constable and NYCC Assistant Director within any Strategic Management Group that is formed. It is for each agency to determine their suitable representative, however, such individuals must be empowered with full decision-making authority.

4.2 Initial Strategy Discussion and Meeting

Where a professional becomes concerned that a case may be organised or complex in accordance with the definition set out within the procedure, the professional must immediately inform their Child Protection Lead. The Head of Safeguarding for NYCC CYPS and the Head of Safeguarding for North Yorkshire Police (NYP) must be informed immediately

In the identified manager's absence the normal deputising arrangements must be followed.

A discussion must be held within 24 hours of the referral being received between the NYCC and NYP designated post holders above or nominated deputies. Where the Head of NYCC CYPS and NYP determine that the case should be progressed under these procedures, a Complex Case Management (CCM) meeting will be convened within 72 hours to share information and agree the next steps.

It is the responsibility of the Strategic Managers within NYCC CYPS and NYP to decide and agree which named representatives are required to participate in the strategy meeting. This should include an appropriate lead communication officer (NYCC and/or NYP) to provide advice as required.

The Complex Case Management (CCM) discussion/meeting must:

- Assess the information known to date
- Decide what further information is required at this stage
- Arrange for the gathering of all relevant information
- Establish whether and to what extent complex abuse has been uncovered
- Undertake an initial mapping exercise to determine the scale of the investigation and possible individuals implicated
- Consider a plan for the investigation, including resource implications
- Consider any immediate protective action required
- Agree what records and information needs to be secure and/or restricted
- Agree an initial investigative, communication and support strategy

At the conclusion of the CCM discussion/meeting if the information indicates reasonable cause to suspect organised and complex child abuse is taking or has taken place the Director of NYCC CYPS and the NYP ACC should be notified.

The Director of NYCC CYPS retains responsibility to ensure the NYSCB Chair, the NYCC Chief Executive, Senior Communication Lead Officers for NYP and NYCC and Senior Managers of all relevant agencies are informed.

If the case does not meet this threshold, then the investigation should be managed under normal existing child protection arrangements. If, after further enquiries are made, it becomes clear that the situation is more complex, then a further CCM discussion/meeting should be re-convened.

There are occasions where organised and/or complex child abuse is not initially evident or identified but during the course of the investigation becomes apparent. In such cases the matter should be brought to the attention of the Head of Safeguarding (NYCC CYPS) and/or the Head of Safeguarding (NYP) as soon as practicable who will review and agree whether the case meets the criteria to instigate action under this procedure.

4.3 Complex Case Management (CCM) Strategic Management Group (SMG)

To ensure a co-ordinated response a CCM Strategic Management Group (SMG), Chaired by North Yorkshire Police (or in exceptional circumstances by NYCC CYPS) can be convened within five days of the receipt of the referral. The CCM SMG where enacted will act as a steering group to formulate and co-ordinate the required response. It must be a primary responsibility of this group to ensure that the welfare of children and any vulnerable adults are paramount at all times.

A Police Gold group may be held in parallel with the CCM SMG process.

Where a CCM SMB is established the membership of the CCM SMG must comprise of senior staff that are able to commit resources on behalf of their organisation. The CCM SMG must have the following core membership that should remain constant through the investigation (although there may be a need to add or co-opt) in other personnel as the investigation progresses:

- Director or Assistant Director NYCC CYPS
- Detective Superintendent for Safeguarding NYP
- The Police Senior Investigating Officer (SIO)
- Head of Safeguarding NYCC CYPS
- Senior Health Representative (Designated Doctor and/or Designated Nurse)
- NYSCB Safeguarding Unit Lead or Manager

The group may also include the following members as necessary:

- Senior Legal Adviser
- Communication Officers

Other senior professionals relevant to the specific case will be invited as appropriate.

At an initial CCM SMG meeting a protocol for information sharing across all agencies along with a clear communication strategy should be agreed. At the first meeting of the CCM SMG the terms of reference must be agreed and recorded. At all subsequent meetings held in accordance with this guidance accurate records of meetings must be kept. Appropriate information security processes should be applied in the recording and sharing of information.

The CCM SMG meeting must take ownership of the strategic leadership of the investigation and agree a plan that may include:

- A decision on the scale of the investigation and the staff required for the joint investigation group
- The consideration of any cross boundary issues and planning of appropriate liaison and sharing of resources for inter-agency working
- The identification of staff in both NYCC CYPS services and NYP of sufficient seniority and experience to manage the investigative process
- The agreement of the staffing of the investigation, allocation of tasks and the membership of the investigation management group (including the line management responsibilities)
- Arrangements for health staff to conduct assessments
- Arrangements for sufficient administrative staff and information technology resources to support the investigation
- The arrangement and resourcing of access to expert legal advice (eg NYP and/or NYCC Legal Service and early CPS Advice)
- Sufficient support, supervision and de-briefing of staff involved to address the impact of stress on frontline workers from any agency involved
- The availability of expert advice where necessary
- Timescales for the stages of the investigation
- The management of public relations and media interest in the case
- Child Witness support, if relevant

4.4 Tasks and Functions of the CCM SMG

The tasks and functions of a CCM SMG may vary from case to case but should also normally include the following actions:

- The governance of future handling of the investigation (eg relating to media communication and victim/witness support)
- The governance for the sharing of information, to ensure that the investigative team secures full access to records from all agencies affected by the investigation and individuals holding important information, and to commit all parties to providing the necessary help with obtaining records from any outside organisations.
- To ensure staff safety and welfare in conducting the investigation

To help ensure that any current risks to children that emerge during the course of the investigation are acted upon immediately, the CCM SMG should develop a risk management protocol and regularly review risk indicators in relation to the subject children.

A CCM SMG is responsible for monitoring and reviewing compliance with investigative procedures and should also agree the management of questions of potential financial compensations for victims and clarify that members of the investigation team should not instigate any discussion of the issue and avoid discussing it if it is raised by any victims and/or witnesses in the course of the investigation. Practical guidance should be given to interviewing officers in line with this policy.

Further guidance is contained within the following documents:

See also Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings

https://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/best_evidence_in_criminal_proceedings.pdf

It is vital that all statements to the media are cleared, via the NYP Senior Investigating Officer (SIO), at the level of the CCM SMG and the SIO must always be made aware of any pre-sentence communications to ensure that the integrity of the prosecution is maintained.

Careful consideration must be given throughout the investigation to the health and social care needs of child victims and adult survivors, particularly those who will be acting as witnesses. The CCM SMG will need to ensure that any witness's ability to give evidence in criminal proceedings is not prejudiced by the provision of such assistance and that guidance on pre-trial therapy is taken into account. Planning should include consideration of pre-court and continued support through to and beyond any court proceedings.

A CCM SMG must also consider whether independent or third sector agencies operating in establishments (such as residential homes) should be directly involved in, or have knowledge of the strategic management of the investigation. This consideration should include communication with the establishment's regulatory body (such as Ofsted).

A CCM SMG should agree a schedule of dates for future meetings in order to:

- Monitor the progress, quality and integrity of the investigation
- Review risk indicators for the children/vulnerable adults involved
- Consider resource requirements
- Consider the appropriate timing of the termination of the investigation
- Plan a de-brief meeting with the joint investigation group to identify lessons learnt

A CCM SMG should remain in existence until at least the outcome of criminal proceedings.

Where it cannot be avoided that some members of the NYSCB Safeguarding Proactive Review Group (SPRG) also become members of a CCM SMG these members must be clear about the distinct roles they hold within each group. This clarity is necessary to prevent confusion around the function of both groups.

A member of the CCM SMG must be identified to act as co-ordinator between the CCM SMG and the CMM Investigative Group (usually the NYP Senior Investigating Officer or NYCC CYPS Lead Manager).

4.5 Serious Case Reviews

A CCM SMG should consider whether the circumstances of the case fit the criteria for a Serious Case Review or other form of lessons learnt review and refer this to the NYSCB SPRG for consideration in line with NYSCB Procedures.

If a formal review is necessary, this will be co-ordinated by the NYSCB in accordance with Working Together 2018 and NYSCB Procedures. Further guidance can be found on the NYSCB website or by using the following link:

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/notifiable-childcare-incidents>

4.6 Complex Case Management (CCM) Investigation Group (IG)

Where formed, a CCM SMG should identify those professionals from within and outside their organisations who have the required expertise, skills and qualifications to deal with a complex abuse investigation.

Where a CCM SMG is not formed as it is deemed that the case can be managed by a CCM IG the CCM IG will take on the roles and responsibilities outlined of the CCM SMG.

The CCM IG should be led by the NYP Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) or NYP Head of Safeguarding and consist of experienced personnel from NYP and NYCC CYPS. Membership may also include appropriate health professionals (in particular the Forensic Medical Examiner, Designated and Named Doctors and Nurses for Safeguarding, and, Mental Health Specialists); Education (Head Teachers), CPS, Legal Services, Probation and Victim Support Specialists.

In the selection of staff it is essential to identify individuals in whom it is possible to place absolute trust and those who can display sensitivity, honesty, empathy and personal maturity. The process will require the careful checking of references and employment history. It is vital that all investigators are and can be seen to be independent from those parties who are subject of any investigation. The selection should also consider specialist requirements arising from any diverse individual needs for the relevant child or children.

NYP, as Chair agency, should co-ordinate the required administrative support, information technology and accommodation requirements. A key issue in any complex abuse investigation will be ensuring the security of the investigation. The enquiry may be managed on the Home Office Large Major Enquiry System (HOLMES) a police management tool for the running of large and complex enquiries.

Those managing the investigation need to be aware that there may be attempts to sabotage the investigation destroy materials or to interfere with or intimidate witnesses and/or staff. Appropriate steps should be taken to minimise these risks.

Certain investigations may involve an element of whistleblowing. In this context it should be possible for individuals to approach the investigative team with confidence as to their anonymity and personal safety. However, it should be made clear that it is not possible to give an unequivocal guarantee of confidentiality during any potential subsequent court proceedings.

The size of the group may vary dependent on the complexity of the case. Tasks and responsibilities for the CCM IG may vary from case to case but could include the following:

- Planning the overall investigation, involving evidence gathering, interrelated interviews and other investigative methods
- Consideration of cross boundary implications and planning
- Holding planning meetings for specific investigative lines of enquiry
- Convening and co-ordination of safeguarding meetings
- Co-ordination and deployment of therapeutic interventions
- Planning and oversight of arrangements for court hearings and support to children and families
- Provide a forum where professionals can meet, exchange information and devise tactics for the implementation of an agreed strategies
- Ensure a consistent strategy for interviewing victims within and external to the Local Authority area
- Keep the SMG informed of any resource shortages experienced
- Ensure a consistent and appropriate inter-agency approach to practical and emotional support for victims and families throughout the investigation, including facilitating such services where victims fall outside of the jurisdiction of the investigating agencies
- Co-ordinate inter-agency response to families and provide consistent information
- Ensure all staff working on the investigation are given support and ensure welfare concerns are addressed
- Ensure that issues which need to be shared by other agencies not represented on a CCM SMG or investigation management group are communicated and addressed
- Ensure that all staff involved in the investigation are clear about the parameters of shared information, data protection and confidentiality between the various agencies and observe the terms of the information sharing protocol agreed by the SMG. It should be clear that investigators will have full access to records and individuals who hold important information.

Meetings of this group should always be fully recorded. The NYP Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) or nominated deputy should chair the group and membership should include representatives from NYCC CYPS, Education, Health and relevant Legal Services. Other agencies should be invited as appropriate.

4.7 Crossing Geographical and Operational Boundaries

It may be evident from the outset or become so during an investigation that there are:

- victims and/or potential victims

- and/or
- perpetrators and/or potential perpetrators

in more than one geographical area.

At the outset, the responsibility for managing the investigation lies with the Police Force in the locality where the abuse is alleged to have occurred and/or where the alleged perpetrator(s) are alleged to operate. Where operationally possible, the Police will make the necessary approaches and contact with other relevant areas through an established CCM SMG or IG. There will be occasions where there are urgent safeguarding requirements where this is not operationally possible and CCM SMG or IG members should be notified as soon as possible any developments.

Where operationally feasible, once it is recognised that there are suspected or potential victims and/or perpetrators in other areas, a joint approach should be made through an established North Yorkshire SMG to the appropriate Police Force, Local Authority CSC and Health teams. A documented agreement should be reached between all parties regarding the responsibility for investigative action and victim support within the new geographic area. The original CCM IG should retain oversight and co-ordination of the investigation. If the numbers of victims and/or perpetrators outside of the original geographic boundary increases to such an extent that it cannot respond then a joint investigative team in the new geographical area should be established.

It is essential that there is a joint CCM SMG to provide overall planning. There must be close working between co-ordinators and clear processes for full information sharing.

4.8 Closure

There must be a clearly defined exit strategy not only in relation to closure of the investigation, but also with regard to victims and witnesses who may require on-going support at the conclusion of any trial or investigation.

If a suspected abuser is working with children in a child care position, or in the education service, evidence and information should be shared to support disciplinary proceedings and to enable, where appropriate, the referral of suspected abusers to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the relevant regulatory bodies.

At the conclusion of the investigation each agency should undertake a review, with a view to identifying any requirement for a learning lessons review, changes to policy, practice or disciplinary processes that may be necessary.

The CCM SMG or IG should have a final meeting where concluding information and debriefing can be shared. The CCM SMG or IG must evaluate the investigation and where relevant an overview report should be compiled with the support of the NYSCB and any lessons learned identified and disseminated accordingly. The storage and security of material relating to the investigation should be agreed.