

Children's Services

Guidance: Children in our care and the risks of Modern Slavery and Trafficking

1. Purpose

The aims of this guidance are:

- To enable Children's Services officers to identify the risks of modern slavery
- To enable Children's Services officers to identify and use local and national response mechanisms, so that their response to suspected modern slavery is rapid, confidential and effective
- To set out a requirement for practitioners to discuss the risks of modern slavery with all children coming into our care, with particular regard to the risks that may be faced by unaccompanied migrant children

2. Scope and local context

This guidance should be used when a child comes into the care of Dorset Council.

Some unaccompanied migrant children are at particular risk of modern slavery and human trafficking. This guidance should be used together with our core procedure [Unaccompanied Migrant Children and Child Victims of Trafficking and Modern Slavery](#) and the *Dorset Council Modern Slavery Protocol and Guidance* due for issue on the Dorset Council website in June 2023 (please contact Dorset Community Safety Partnership for details in the meantime).

3. Identifying Modern Slavery

The Equality and Human Rights Commission defines modern slavery as follows:

- Slavery is when someone actually owns you like a piece of property.
- Servitude is similar to slavery - you might live on the person's premises, work for them and be unable to leave, but they don't own you.
- Forced labour means you are forced to do work that you have not agreed to, under the threat of punishment.¹

¹ [Article 4: Freedom from slavery and forced labour | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](#), viewed May 2023

Human trafficking is a factor in some but not all cases of modern slavery. Human trafficking is when a person is moved for the purpose of exploitation; this includes movement within a country, whether from one city to another or even just a few streets away.

For more information about modern slavery and trafficking, please see [Child Trafficking and Modern Slavery](#) on the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (PDSCP) site.

4. Disrupting Modern Slavery: Safeguarding Procedures and the National Referral Mechanism

Modern slavery and trafficking are forms of abuse. Two resources provide key support to practitioners in disrupting these forms of abuse: our [Child Safeguarding Procedures](#) and the [National Referral Mechanism](#).

Please follow our Child Safeguarding Procedures in any situation where you suspect that modern slavery and/or trafficking may be taking place.

Notifications under the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) will usually be made by the Children's Advice and Duty (ChAD) team at the point of referral. If you believe that a young person should be referred to the NRM, please speak with your line manager.

5. Discussing the risk of Modern Slavery with Unaccompanied Children

When a child or young person comes into our care, the child's Social Worker should speak with them:

- i) To seek to establish whether they have experienced or are experiencing modern slavery or other forms of criminal exploitation. These are likely to be difficult areas for a young person to speak about; they are only likely to do so once they fully trust their Social Worker. The initial conversation should therefore begin to establish this trust; the Social Worker should make clear to the young person that they will get rapid and effective help if they ever report slavery, trafficking or exploitation.
- ii) To make the young person aware of the risks of slavery and other forms of exploitation, indicators that they should be aware of, and how to report these.

There is useful information for practitioners about [protecting young people from trafficking and slavery](#) produced by the NSPCC.

[Live Safe](#) produces information about modern slavery and exploitation for young people.