Terms of Reference for the Weekly Operational Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Meetings

(Weekly MACE Level 1 & 2)

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# Purpose

The Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) have identified “Tackling Child Exploitation” as one of their key strategic priorities within their Business Plan. Assurance is sought through the governance structure detailed further on within this document.

The MACE arrangements contribute to the delivery of the child exploitation strategic priority and outcome. MACE will work to the principle that children and young people's behaviours, levels of vulnerability and levels of resilience, are all informed by their surroundings and the contexts in which they spend their time. MACE have therefore adopted the contextual safeguarding approach throughout the preparation and during each discussion held.

In every case discussion, advice and guidance is provided as standard to the referrer / involved agencies. Any relevant information is shared with partners to update individuals records for any current / future concerns and inform wider understanding of CE concerns within Lincolnshire.

All children / young people, by the definition of their age and associated vulnerabilities, are at risk of exploitation. It is recognised however, that for some children / young people, exploitation risks are increased due to additional vulnerabilities; including where they go and / or who they associate with.

The MACE process establishes where there is a specific role for MACE in addition to that which is / can be achieved through the single or multi-agency working arrangements already in place and / or available outside of MACE. MACE does not replace involved professionals safeguarding responsibilities who remain responsible for continuing to explore and respond to exploitation concerns, working with other agencies where possible, to reduce these risks.

# Objectives

* To identify and disrupt child exploitation in Lincolnshire.
* To identify and ensure the correct level of support is in place for victims of child exploitation.
* To identify, target and disrupt suspected perpetrators of exploitation.
* To identify and disrupt locations where child exploitation is suspected to be occurring.
* To identify and appropriately address threat, risk, and harm to victims of child exploitation.

# Outcome and success measures

Outcome and success measures are captured and monitored within the Exploitation Development Plan which has a focus on the impact for victims of child exploitation. This work is monitored by the Strategic Child Exploitation and Missing Sub-Group with further oversight captured within the LSCP QA Framework.

# Governance

**LSCP Strategic Management Group**

**Strategic Child Exploitation and Missing Sub-Group**

**LSCP Operational Delivery Group**

**Operational Child Exploitation and Missing Steering Group**

**Operational MACE - Levels 1 and 2**

**Operational Child Exploitation and Missing Working Group**

# Meetings and Attendance

MACE Level 1 meetings take place on a weekly basis virtually online. Further details on when the agenda is set and how the research process is conducted can be found within the MACE Level 1 Roles and Responsibilities document which can be found on the [LSCP policy and Procedures Manual](https://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/local_resources.html) under the Child Exploitation header.

MACE Level 2 meetings take place on a weekly basis virtually online. Further details on when the agenda is set can be found within the MACE Level 2 Core Panel and Invited Attendees Roles and Responsibilities document which can be found on the [LSCP policy and Procedures Manual](https://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/local_resources.html) under the Child Exploitation header.

# Chairing Arrangements

The chair of MACE Level 1 and 2 rotates between lead agencies. Further information on the roles and responsibilities of the chair can be found within the MACE Level 1 & 2 Roles and Responsibilities documents which can be found on the [LSCP policy and Procedures Manual](https://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/local_resources.html) under the Child Exploitation header.

# Expectations

All attendees must use appropriate, non-victim blaming, language when discussing exploitation. [Child Exploitation Language Guide | The Children's Society (childrenssociety.org.uk)](https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/child-exploitation-language-guide)

Children and young people’s safety and welfare is paramount, professionals should appropriately challenge concerns about the action or inaction of another professional or agency.

MACE does not replace involved professionals’ safeguarding responsibilities who remain responsible for continuing to explore and respond to exploitation concerns, working with other agencies where possible, to reduce these risks.

Cases are discharged from MACE when there is no specific role identified for MACE in addition to that which is/ can be achieved through the established single or multi-agency working arrangements already in place/available outside of MACE. There may be ongoing exploitation concerns at the point of discharge, the expectation is that involved agencies will continue to have a focus on these and how to reduce these risks.

It is essential that prior to the initial MACE meeting and between any subsequent MACE review meetings, the young person’s plan focused on exploitation concerns and there is regular communication between agencies.

# Membership and Contributors

**MACE Level 1:**

The meeting cannot go ahead if there is not representation from each of the core agencies (health, police and children services). Under these circumstances, the MACE Chair and relevant Operational MACE point of contact for the absent agency will be informed, and a rearranged meeting must take place within 10 working days.

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| --- |
| **Core Panel** |
| Police – Intelligence Support Officer |
| Lincolnshire Community Health Services (representing LPFT & Primary Care) |
| Children Services – Future 4 Me Child Exploitation and Missing Coordinator / Practice Supervisor or above |
| **Contributing non-attending agencies (complete MACE Research form):** |
| Education |
| NACRO |
| District Councils |
| We Are with You |
| ULHT |

**MACE LEVEL 2:**

The meeting cannot go ahead if there is not representation from each of the core agencies (health, police, children services and minute taker). Under these circumstances, the MACE Chair and relevant Operational MACE point of contact for the absent agency will be informed, and a rearranged meeting must take place within 10 working days.

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| **Core Panel:** |
| Police – Neighbourhood Policing AND Intelligence Support Officer |
| Lincolnshire Community Health Services (Representing LPFT & Primary Care) and / or United Lincolnshire Hospital Trust |
| Children Services – F4Me Child Exploitation and Missing Coordinator / Practice Supervisor or above |
| Child Exploitation and Missing Business Support – minute taker |
| We are With You |
| District Council representative for the relevant area |
| NEST (NACRO Education Support and Transition) Accommodation providers |
| **Invited Attendees (where applicable):** |
| Education Settings |
| Registered Social Landlord |
| Rough Sleeper Team (Change for Lincs) |
| Involved Children’s Services Worker (Lead Professional) |
| Ethnic Minority and Travellers Education Team |
| British Transport Police |
| Other Local Authorities (i.e. Police, Children’s Services) |
| Probation |

# Deputies – MACE Level 2

Members are expected to attend, but named deputies can attend in their absence. For further information on what information is required and timescales applied for instances where attendance is not possible, please refer to the MACE Level 2 Roles and Responsibilities document which can be found on the [LSCP policy and Procedures Manual](https://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/local_resources.html) under the Child Exploitation header.

# Escalations

Each agency has appointed a representative as a contact for MACE related escalations. Whether this is to raise outstanding MACE actions, screening tools or attendance etc. Further details of the Operational MACE points of contact can be found within the MACE Action Tracker Escalation Process document which can be found on the [LSCP policy and Procedures Manual](https://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/local_resources.html) under the Child Exploitation header.

# MACE Statements

Four statements, detailed below (MACE Research, Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest and Crime Recording), are contained within the MACE level 1 and 2 agendas. These statements are relevant to all information shared as part of the MACE process, which includes agendas and supporting documentation shared prior to the meetings, verbal and written information shared during the meetings and any subsequent written information shared following the meeting. It is the responsibility of each professional in attendance of any MACE meeting and / or contribution to the wider MACE process to have read the MACE statements and abide by these conditions.

# MACE Research

Information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Information sharing decisions should be based on considerations of the safety and well-being of an individual and others who may be affected by their actions.

When a victim, person or location of concern is on the MACE agenda (MACE Level 1 or 2), agencies are expected to check what information is held regarding the named victim, person or Location of concern ONLY to enable them to share relevant information during the meeting. Checks should not be completed regarding other individuals who are named within any MACE documents and/ or known to be linked to the victim or person of concern that are not listed as an individual case on the agenda. Agencies can complete checks and provide information about locations that are linked to a victim or person of concern on the agenda but are not listed as a location of concern if this does not involve the sharing of other individual’s personal information.

During the meeting if there are safeguarding concerns identified which warrant agencies to check and share information they hold about any other linked individuals, this should be recorded as an action with confirmation of what has agreed to be shared, with whom and for what purposes.

# Confidentiality

Information discussed by the agency representatives within the ambit of the MACE meeting is strictly confidential and must not be disclosed to third parties without the agreement of the partners of the meeting. Information is shared under the guidance of Working Together 2018 and should focus on child protection concerns. A clear distinction should be made between fact and professional opinion.

All work undertaken at the meetings will be informed by a commitment to equal opportunities and effective practice issues in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The minutes will aim to reflect that all individuals discussed at these meetings should be treated fairly and without improper discrimination.

The minutes will be marked Official-Sensitive and should be stored in line with individual agencies’ policies on the retention of Official-Sensitive information. Minutes must not be photocopied. Permission should be sought from the MACE Chair to share information from the MACE Meeting (verbal and/ or written). Any notes taken are strictly confidential and shall not be shared outside of the MACE meeting.

Permission must be sought from the Chair if at a later point it is considered essential that information is shared with another agency. The Chair will then consult all relevant agencies that information relates to and decide what information can be shared.

# Conflict of Interest

Professionals must declare any conflict of interests regarding any individuals discussed within the MACE process, in line with their individual agency’s policies. Professionals should not attend MACE and/ or Social Network Analysis discussions if there is a known conflict of interest in relation to any of the individuals that are due to be discussed. If professionals become aware of a conflict of interest during MACE and/ or Social Network Analysis discussions, they must make the Chair aware immediately, leave the meeting and declare this in line with their individual agency’s policies.

# Crime Recording

During the meeting, criminal offences or serious breaches of agencies’/staff professional codes of conduct may be disclosed. Please be aware that some agencies present are duty bound to report such information back to their employer.  If this situation arises, the MACE Chair must be informed as a matter of courtesy and consideration is given to how this can be managed from a MACE perspective.

# Identification and Categorisation of Risk

The MACE response will depend on the level of risk assigned, for further information on risk levels; please refer to the MACE Risk Levels document which can be found on the [LSCP policy and Procedures Manual](https://lincolnshirescb.proceduresonline.com/local_resources.html) under the Child Exploitation header.

# Information Sharing Agreement

**Screening Tool:**

The MACE screening Tool is initially shared with agencies (detailed within the LSCP Information Sharing Agreement) with perceived involvement with any victim, person or location of concern identified within the submitted form purely for the purpose of gathering further information. This document is then included within the MACE recording form, details of whom this form is later shared with is detailed below.

**MACE Level 1 documentation:**

The MACE recording form which contains the original screening tool, research undertaken, discussion points, outcome and actions will be shared with the MACE Level 1 attendees and those members that were invited to engage in the research.

**MACE Level 2 documentation:**

The MACE recording form which contains the original screening tool, previous research and MACE discussions including the discussion points, outcome and actions from this meeting will be shared with the MACE Level 2 attendees.

Please refer to the “Confidentiality” section above for details around ongoing sharing of this information.

# Changes to the Terms of Reference

Any changes made to the Terms of Reference will be agreed by the Child Exploitation and Missing Sub-Group.

**Approval:**

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| **Date** | **Status** | **By** |
| 14/08/2023 | Draft | Operational CE-M Working Group |
| 27/09/2023 | Agreed | Strategic CE-M Sub-group |