**PAN-BEDFORDSHIRE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION STRATEGY 2015-2017**

**BEDFORDSHIRE HAS A ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY ON SEXUAL EXPLOITATION.**

**WE WILL PROACTIVELY WORK IN PARTNERSHIP TO KEEP CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION.**

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**INTRODUCTION**

In Bedfordshire we recognise that CSE cannot be dealt with by individual organisations working alone. Both victims and offenders cross administrative boundaries, and therefore the collective response of those who work to protect children and young people is a must.

This strategy sets out our commitment that all agencies across Bedfordshire, serving the community, will work together to prevent CSE happening. We are clear that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. We will pursue and prosecute offenders and we will protect those who have been victims and survivors. We are committed to listening to children, young people and the community. The voice of the child is at the heart of what we do.

CSE is child abuse and we will not tolerate it in our community.

**BEDFORDSHIRE**

Bedfordshire is divided into three unitary authorities: Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton. The three local authorities have very distinctive populations with vastly different profiles and needs. This strategy makes it clear, that despite these differences we are committed to working together to prevent and manage CSE whilst at the same time responding to the individual needs of each community. Through working together, we have developed our understanding of CSE and the aims and objectives of this strategy and the associated action plan is based on national guidance underpinned by local understanding.

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**OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

We have identified three key areas that need to be strategically addressed. This strategy identifies our plans to increase our effectiveness in how we prevent CSE from happening by raising awareness, how we pursue those responsible by identifying them early and pro-actively target and disrupt their activity, and how we protect children and young people who are at risk of, or who are victims or survivors of CSE by providing early help and support.

**GOVERNANCE**

Governance of this strategy sits with the Bedfordshire Chief Executive’s Forum, its CSE sub group and the Pan Bedfordshire Strategic Board. In addition the three Directors of Children’s Services will report to their respective Local Safeguarding Children Boards on this strategy and its implementation. The LSCB’s will hold partners to account for their role in delivering this strategy and associated action plan.

**LINKS TO OTHER STRATEGIES**

We recognise that CSE cannot be considered in isolation to other forms of abuse or exploitation and that there can be an overlap with other areas of need. This strategy must therefore be considered and implemented alongside other strategies and procedures.

This strategy is informed by the See Me, Hear Me Framework (www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk).

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**PREVENT**

Raising awareness of CSE amongst children young people, adults, parents, carers, professionals, the community and potential perpetrators to prevent exploitation and reduce tolerance of sexually exploitative behaviours

**PURSUE**

Working together to bring offenders to justice and disrupt behaviour. Identifying them early, targeting them via multi-agency disruption plans and securing justice for victims by obtaining convictions

**PROTECT**

Identifying children and young people at risk or subject to sexual exploitation and providing early help and support

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**FOR SUCCESS IN PREVENT**

- An increase in the number of practitioners trained in identifying and appropriately responding to CSE.
- An increase in public and practitioners reports of CSE as a result of awareness campaigns.
- An increase in the number of children, young people and families aware of CSE and what to do if they have concerns for themselves or other children and young people.

**FOR SUCCESS IN PURSUE**

- An increase in the amount of disruption activity employed against perpetrators.
- An increase in the number of prosecutions for CSE crimes.
- An increased identification of CSE hotspots and people of interest.
- An increase in the quantity and quality of information received and shared between agencies working to protect children and young people.

**FOR SUCCESS IN PROTECT**

- An increase in attendance of children/youth people and their carers at multi-agency meetings.
- An increase in the engagement of children and young people in preventative interventions and support.
- An increase in the involvement of children and young people in the decision making process about their care and protection.
- Every child or young person at risk of CSE has a risk assessment completed.

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For further information about how we are addressing CSE in Bedfordshire go to: [www.bedfordshireagainstcse.org](http://www.bedfordshireagainstcse.org)