



Staffordshire Police Equality Impact Assessment



The purpose of this EIA is to ensure you consider any equality issues as part of your decision making when developing / reviewing your policy / procedure.

Please complete the sections below and send to the Equality and Diversity unit to be quality assured. New / revised policies cannot be published on the policy database until the EIA has passed the quality assurance process.

Title of policy:	Child Protection Policy
Department:	Investigative Services
Date:	15 th November 2012

1. Identify the aims and purpose of the policy

A child is a person under the age of 18 years

Children within Staffordshire should be able to grow in circumstances where they feel safe and supported, so they can have the best opportunities throughout childhood, teenage years and into adulthood. To achieve this, Staffordshire Police will work together with other organisations to safeguard children and prevent them from suffering harm.

Staffordshire Police is committed to the prevention and detection of crime, the protection of those who are vulnerable and preserving the rights of all individuals.

The aim and purpose of the Child Protection Policy is to achieve safeguarding of children by providing clear direction to all staff and to enable effective work with partner agencies including non government bodies. Successful joint working to safeguard children requires the coordination of all agencies and professionals who

have different roles, skills and expertise regarding child protection and who may also be located in different geographical areas.

Individual children need coordinated help from health, education, children's social care and other agencies including youth justice services. When effectively coordinated, joint working enables agencies to respond earlier and more efficiently to safeguard children.

Staffordshire Police will rigorously pursue all allegations of abuse to children thereby safeguarding their welfare, their future and their rights.

2. Identify the individuals and organisations who are likely to have an interest in, or be affected by the policy.

Stoke on Trent Local Safeguarding Childrens Board. The jointly agreed procedure in Stoke on Trent for dealing with Child Protection matters can be viewed at:

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/professionals/procedure-manuals/>

Staffordshire County Council Safeguarding Childrens Board. The jointly agreed procedures in Staffordshire for dealing with Child Protection matters can be viewed at:

<http://www.staffsscb.org.uk/professionals/procedures/>

OfSTED Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

Staffordshire First Response is a service for children in Staffordshire from pre-birth to 18 years who don't currently have a dedicated Social Worker. Call them free on 0800 1313 126 from 8am - 8pm Monday-Friday or email: frist@staffordshire.gov.uk ([Opens in new window](#))

Stoke-on-Trent Children and Young People Services: 01782 235100

Social Services Children's Advice: 01274 437500

Chat Danger: www.chatdanger.com ([Opens in new window](#))

Childnet International: www.childnet-int.org ([Opens in new window](#))

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000 Childline: 0800 11 11

Barnardos: www.barnardos.org.uk ([Opens in new window](#)) - 0121 550 5271

All Staffordshire police officers and police staff.

Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner

Staffordshire Police Federation

UNISON Staffordshire

8 District Councils of Staffordshire
Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC)
Home Office
Members of the Public.

3. Data

Summarise the findings of any monitoring data / information which you have considered regarding the impact of this policy on people from all or any of the protected groups. This could include national or local data.

Each year there are approximately 5,000 child deaths registered in England, 5% of which in 2009 -10 were deemed as 'preventable' when reviewed by Child Death Overview Panels.¹ Preventable deaths are defined by "events, actions or omissions contributing to the death of a child or to substandard care of a child who dies, and which, by means of national or locally achievable interventions, can be modified".

Child deaths along with other harmful life events can subsequently lead to Serious Case Reviews (SCR's) which are a multi agency examination of all the known facts prior to the significant event of abuse including where the child dies. 618 Serious Case Reviews have been carried out across the country between 2003 and 2009.²

Between November 2003 and November 2010 22 SCRs have been carried out by the respective Safeguarding Children's Boards in Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. 8 had been undertaken by Stoke on Trent and 14 by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board. All SCRs were due to the serious injury or death of a child (14 of the 22 children died = 64%).

The majority of the children subject to a Serious Case Review were known to Social Care (17 out of 22). Ten children had been the subject of a child protection conference, and six children went on to be placed on a child protection plan or the child protection register. Analysis of the cases indicated there are three key indicators that are often found to be

¹ Number of child death reviews completed by Child Death Overview Panels (CDOPs_ on behalf of Local Safeguarding Childrens Boards (LSCBs) – Years ending 31 March 2009 and 2010.

² Research report DFE-RR040 Building on the learning from serious case reviews 2007 -2009

present where children are affected by violence or sexual abuse. The three factors that are strong indicators of harm to a child are:

Parental mental ill health
Parental substance misuse and
Domestic violence,

It has been found that in every SCR case that contained at least one of the three factors above also contained some aspect of sexual offences involving a parent either as a victim or offender. In addition every case that contained all three factors also contained sexual offences.

Although the three factors are present in some form throughout the majority of SCR findings it is not conclusive as only 14 from 22 cases contained all three factors. 4 cases contained 2 factors, 2 cases contained 1, and 2 cases did not include any of these factors. However this is based on parental problems. When expanded to focus on problems faced by the child themselves, the three factors become more reliable, particularly in cases effecting older children.

Of the cases involving older children, 15 contained all three factors, 5 cases contained two, and the same 2 cases mentioned earlier contained none of the three factors.

It is appropriate that in addition to the three factors above, there should also be an examination of a fourth category based on whether the child and/or the parent has committed or been the victim of a sexual offence. A consideration of whether all 4 factors are present in SCRs would therefore focus on:

- I. Mental ill health suffered by the child and/or their parent
- II. Substance misuse
- III. Domestic violence,
- IV. The child or parent has committed, or been a victim of, sexual offences.

Count of indicators from 22 SCR cases examined by age of child	Mental ill Health	Substance Misuse	Domestic Violence	Sexual Offences	'3' Factor Total	'4' Factor Total
0-1 (Parent)	7	5	6	7	4	4
1-10 (Parent)	3	3	3	4	3	3
11-17 (Parent)	8	7	10	9	7	7
11-17 (Parent & Child)	9	9	10	10	8	8
Total (parents only)	18	15	19	20	14	14
Total (parents & child)	19	17	19	21	15	15

Risk Factors in 0-1 year old children

There were a total of 8 Serious Case Reviews (SCR) involving 0-1 year old infants where analysis identified the risk factors below:

PRE-DISPOSING RISK FACTORS (0-1yrs)	Frequency in 8 cases
The child's parents were still together	8/8
The child had not been subject to Local Authority care	8/8
The harmful event was linked to parental behaviour or neglect	8/8
The child was the youngest in the family	8/8
The child had older siblings (full/half or step)	7/8
The child's primary care giver was their parents	7/8
The child or their sibling had received a known injury prior to the event	7/8
The child's Father (role) had criminal conviction/s	7/8
The child's Father (role) often failed to engage with agencies	7/8
The child's Grandparent had criminal conviction/s	7/8
The child's Mother (role) (4) or Father (role) (5) had a mental ill health	7/8
Parents were themselves victim or offender of sexual offences	7/8

Risk factors in 1-10 year olds

There have been four Serious Case Reviews for children aged between 1 and 10 years old. The parents played a role in the harmful event suffered by the child within the 1-10

year olds, and child protection issues had been highlighted in each family prior to the event. Each of the four families was already known to the Police Child Protection Team at some point in time prior to the event.

Bearing in mind the broad range of events that this group covers, there is a varied range of links that can be made between all four of the cases, with core indicators that feature in every SCR within this age group. The primary pre disposing risk factors for 1-10 year olds can be found in the table below

PRE-DISPOSING RISK FACTORS (1-10yrs)	Frequency In 4 cases
The child's primary care giver was their mother and or father	4/4
The child had full siblings	4/4
The child had at least one older sibling	4/4
The child's Mother (role) previously resided out of force area	4/4
The harmful event reason was due to parental behaviour or neglect	4/4
The child (2) or sibling (3) had been subject to a child protection conference	4/4
The child's Mother had been a victim of offences against the person	4/4
The child (1), Mother (3), Father (2) or sibling (3) had themselves been a victim of sexual offences	4/4
The child's Mother (role) often failed to engage/failed appointments with agencies	4/4
The child's Father (role) had criminal convictions	4/4
The child's Father (role) was of concern as a victim or an offender for sexual behaviour	4/4
The child's family was known to Child Protection/GUARDIAN database	4/4
The child's family was known to Social Care in other parts of the UK	4/4

Risk Factors 11-17 year olds

There were a total of 10 Serious Case Reviews (SCR) involving 11-17 year olds. The 10 SCRs actually accounts for 11 children due to one encompassing the events that involved two young girls. 8 children within this age group unfortunately died and there

was one case of child sexual exploitation

The table below indicates the frequency with which the risk factors were present with the 10 cases analysed.

PRE-DISPOSING RISK FACTOR (11-17yrs) Extract	Frequency in 10 cases
The child had younger siblings (Full/Half/Step)	10/10
The child or a parent often failed health appointments	10/10
The child sustained an injury prior to the harmful event leading to SCR	10/10
The child was subject to an inadequate standard of parenting/lack of parental contact	10/10
The child was known to a Social Care authority	10/10
The child (7) or their Mother (9) had been a victim of offences against the person	10/10
The child was not subject of full Child Register/Protection plan - although 5 had been subject of Child Protection Conference/Child in need	9/10
The child committed a crime	9/10
The child had been a victim of offences against the person	9/10
The child was an offender of violence (7) or bullying whilst at school (5)	9/10
The child had experienced mental ill health	9/10
The child had been subject to change of address	9/10
The child (7) or a parent (5) was known to use drugs	9/10
The child's Father (or person in that role) had convictions for crime	9/10

The information above is an extract of a more detailed analytical product which has examined the findings of reviews following adverse incidents where children have died or been seriously injured.

Sexual Exploitation

In addition to the above there has also been an analysis of the sexual exploitation of children.

Sexual exploitation is a complex problem with social, legal, political, economic and ethical dimensions. It takes many singular and interrelated forms including pornography, prostitution, paedophilia, trafficking in human beings, and affects people of different ages, sexes and communities. Sexual exploitation has profound and damaging consequences for individuals exploited and those around them including families and communities. Targeting and grooming of children often brings psychological implications for parents and other family members; it can become almost impossible for them to carry on with their life and be able to respond effectively to the crises at hand. They feel their lives have been turned upside down from a situation they have never anticipated. It can undermine parents' capacity to respond proactively to the needs of their children. Lack of knowledge of the operation of abusers, patterns of grooming, impact of exploitation on their children can contribute to crises so pushing parents into despair.

Article 3 of the Palermo Protocol

To Prevent, Suppress And Punish Trafficking In Persons, Especially Women And Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime to the UN Convention (2000) (ratified by the UK on 6 February 2006) defines trafficking as:

a) "Trafficking of persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat of or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

b) the consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used.

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purposes

of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;

a) Child shall mean any person under 18 years of age.

Internal Trafficking

Children and Young People (both of UK and other citizenship) are being trafficked internally within the UK.

There are documented cases of children, born in the UK, being targeted for internal trafficking between towns and cities for sexual exploitation. The traffickers exert strong control over the children who often have no means of communicating with family or friends and often have no idea where they were in the UK. The children complied with the sexual demands to avoid being further assaulted or their family or friends threatened.

Source – Department of Children Schools and Families (2009) Safeguarding Sexually Exploited Children and Young People: Supplementary Guidance to Working Together HM Government , DCSF

Further information regarding the recognition of child sexual exploitation can be viewed at:

http://www.staffordshire.police.uk/info_advice/crime_prevention/child_sexual_exploitation/

3.1 Age

A child is person under the age of 18 years. The Government has defined the term ‘safeguarding children’ as:

‘The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.’

Child exploitation takes many forms, including sexual activity with a child by one or many adults, child pornography and other pornography on the Internet. The vast majority of children do not get involved voluntarily; they are coerced, enticed, threatened or are

utterly desperate.

Staffordshire Police has a Child Protection Team and a Child Sexual Exploitation team trained and dedicated to investigate offences committed against children jointly with the Children's Social Services and specialists in the medical profession.

3.2 Disability

A 2011 article from Keir Starmer Director of Public Prosecutions included:-

'And then there are those who will admit that the state gets things wrong. The director of public prosecutions has just made a speech admitting that the authorities "are still in the foothills when it comes to [disability](#) hate crime and supporting victims and witnesses with disabilities". Speaking at the University of Sussex, Keir Starmer has acknowledged that disabled people lack confidence in the criminal justice system, and that prosecutors have to do their part in reversing that. '

Full article:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/afua-hirsch-law-blog/2011/mar/02/criminal-justice-ukcrime>

Legislation recognises that there are different needs amongst people who may be the victims of crime or are a witness to a crime according to age, physical or mental ability and race or religion. Being a witness can be stressful. Additional support may be needed if the witness is a child or has a disability which must be recognised and taken into consideration if the child becomes part of a criminal investigation.

Section 16 of the Youth Justice & Criminal Evidence Act 1999 (YJCE Act) defines vulnerable

as:-

- (i) All witnesses under 18 and adult witnesses with mental disorders, learning**
- (ii) disabilities or physical disorders/disabilities**

During a trial in any Court vulnerable witnesses will be eligible for a video recorded interview, a televised link to the courtroom, screens to shield the witness from the defendant, removal of wigs and gowns by judges and barristers.

There will also be access to intermediaries who are specialists who can help witnesses with communication difficulties, and aids to communication such as alphabet boards and

Makaton symbols and signs. Makaton is a language programme using signs and symbols to help people who have little speech or whose speech is unclear to communicate. It is designed to support spoken language and the signs and symbols are used with speech, in spoken word order. See <http://www.makaton.org>

3.3 Race

Legislation recognises that there are different needs amongst people who may be the victims of crime or are a witness to a crime according to race or religion. Being a witness can be stressful. Additional support may be needed if the witness is a child where the cultural or religious needs of the child must be recognised and taken into consideration if the child becomes part of a criminal investigation.

During a trial in any Court vulnerable witnesses will be eligible for a video recorded interview, a televised link to the courtroom, screens to shield the witness from the defendant, removal of wigs and gowns by judges and barristers.

There will also be access to intermediaries who are specialists who can help witnesses with communication difficulties, and aids to communication such as alphabet boards and Makaton symbols and signs. Makaton is a language programme using signs and symbols to help people who have little speech or whose speech is unclear to communicate. It is designed to support spoken language and the signs and symbols are used with speech, in spoken word order. See <http://www.makaton.org>

“Intimidated” witnesses are defined by Section 17 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999, as those whose quality of evidence is likely to be diminished by reason of fear or distress. In deciding whether a witness falls into this category, the court should consider:

- The nature and alleged circumstances of the offence to which the proceedings relate
- The age of the witness
- **The social and cultural background and ethnic origins of the witness**
- The domestic and employment circumstances of the witness, and

- Any religious beliefs or political options of the witness

Any behaviour towards the witness by :-

- The accused
- Members of the accused person's family or associates•
- Any other person who is likely to be either an accused person or a witness in the proceedings

Witnesses who might be regarded as intimidated include victims and witnesses in cases that involve:

- domestic violence
- **racially motivated crime**
- crime motivated by reasons relating to religion
- crime motivated by reasons related to disability
- homophobic and transphobic crime
- violent crime, particularly that involving guns or knives
- gang related violence
- Victims and witnesses who have experienced past or repeat harassment or bullying
- Victims and witnesses who are elderly and frail

3.4 Religion or Belief

There is no decisive data that members of a particular religious group or belief are more at risk than others of becoming the victim of child abuse or being the perpetrators of child abuse. Religious beliefs may support and sustain victims in adversity and enable them to come to terms with what has happened to them. Support and assistance from religious figures who are important to the victim and their family must not be overlooked to assist the victim and family through the investigation process.

3.5 Sex

Victims of child abuse are represented across genders as are perpetrators of child abuse. The policy and procedures take account of the sex of the victim in their response to being the victim of child abuse in terms of after care and support offered by the police and

partnership organisations who have specific responsibilities for the care, education and development of children.

3.6 Sexual Orientation

A child is a person under 18 years of age and there may be a period in the sexual development of a child when the sexual development of a child is unclear. Young children can be misled regarding the nature, relevance and importance of sexual contact as part of a grooming process that is exploitative in nature. The main objective is to improve the investigation of child abuse by maintaining a victim focused approach to encourage them and the person having parental or other responsibility for the child to report being the victim of abuse and to stay with the investigation and in the judicial process.

3.7 Transgender

A child is a person under 18 years of age and there may be a period in the sexual development of a child when their sexual development is unclear. The main objective is to improve the investigation of child abuse by maintaining a victim focused approach to encourage them to report being the victim of abuse and for the child and the person having parental responsibility for the child to stay with the investigation and in the judicial process. Part of the victim focussed approach is to recognise the existence and impact of transgender changes in a child that may be an element in a child being more vulnerable to exploitation or abuse due to feelings of isolation and lack of support or understanding from family or peers.

See paragraph 4.7 below

4. Research

Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy for all or any of the protected groups. This could include information you have obtained from other sources eg. ACPO, Home Office.

4.1 Age

A child is a person under 18 years of age. The management of child abuse investigations is geared towards that simple fact. Children from the age of 18 down to a few weeks can be a victim of abuse. All statutory agencies have a duty to ensure the development of children to reach adulthood. Young victims are interviewed by officers trained to conduct interviews that are recorded by both sound and vision. Such interviews are conducted jointly with partner

agencies from Children's Social Care. As child victims of abuse grow older many victims, particularly victims of sexual abuse, realise what has happened to them and may experience an element of self-blame which prevents them from disclosing to others what has happened. Reassurance and support is crucial to obtaining vital information to assist enquiries and bring offenders to justice.

4.2 Disability

Research evidence suggests that disabled children are more vulnerable to abuse than non-disabled children. A large scale American study that examined records of over 40,000 children found that disabled children were 3.4 times more likely to be abused or neglected than non-disabled children. Disabled children were 3.8 times more likely to be neglected, 3.8 times more likely to be physically abused, 3.1 times more likely to be sexually abused and 3.9 times more likely to be emotionally abused. Overall, the study concluded that 31% of disabled children had been abused, compared to a prevalence rate of 9% among the non-disabled child population (Safeguarding Disabled Children July 2009 Department for Children Schools and Families practice Guidance)

Key features of vulnerability of disabled children in the UK includes:

- Many disabled children are at an increased likelihood of being socially isolated with fewer outside contacts than non disabled children
- Their dependency on parents and carers for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate personal care, increases their risk of exposure to abusive behaviour
- They have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse
- They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening
- They often do not have access to someone they can trust to disclose that they have been abused
- They are especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation
- Looked after disabled children are not only vulnerable to the same factors that exist for all children living away from home, but are particularly susceptible to possible abuse because of their additional dependency on residential and hospital staff for day to day physical care needs.

The vulnerability of children is addressed by the Child Protection Team. There are a number of research articles concerning child abuse and disability. Examples of these are viewable on:

Child Abuse and Neglect: the Role of Mental Health Services.

Internet link: www.rcpsych.ac.uk/files/pdfversion/cr120.pdf

Think child, think parent, think family: a guide to parental mental health and child welfare (SCIE Guide 30).

Internet link: www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide30/index.asp

Safeguarding Disabled Children July 2009 Department for Children Schools and Families practice Guidance

4.3 Race

All victims should be dealt with sensitively in accordance within their own cultural norms where possible. The victim may be fearful of the investigation, which can cause embarrassment, exhaustion or guilt. Many victims feel an element of self-blame. Reassurance is crucial to obtaining vital information to assist enquiries and bring offenders to justice.

Child Trafficking

Any child of any race can potentially be trafficked into or out of the United Kingdom. Any child who is recruited, transported or transferred for the purposes of exploitation is considered to be a trafficking victim, whether or not they have been forced or deceived. This is because it is not considered possible for children to give informed consent. Even when a child understands what has happened, they may still appear to submit willingly to what they believe to be the will of their parents or accompanying adults. Traffickers specifically target impoverished communities in order to exploit their vulnerability. Poor and displaced families may entrust the care of their children to traffickers who promise to provide them with education or skills training, but ultimately exploit them.

Working together to safeguard children - Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked

http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF_Child%20Trafficking.pdf

4.4 Religion or Belief

There is no data that members of a particular religious group or belief are more at risk than others of becoming the victim of child abuse religious beliefs may support and sustain victims in adversity and enable them to come to terms with what has happened to them. Support and assistance from religious figures, who are important to the victim must not be overlooked to assist the victim through the investigation process. The victim may be fearful of the investigation, which can cause embarrassment, exhaustion or guilt. Many victims as they grow older and realise what has happened to them feel an element of self-blame. Reassurance is crucial to obtaining vital information to assist enquiries and bring offenders to justice.

4.5 Sex

The sexual exploitation of boys and young men does happen. The Department of Children Schools and Families (DCSF) 2009, supported by research in the field acknowledges boys and young men, as well as girls and young women can be sexually exploited. Research in this area has been undertaken by Barnardos and an increasing body of knowledge of issues involved is developing. However there is still a need for wider recognition and understanding of the issue. The full picture of young men's experiences often goes unrecognised and professionals may tend to focus on boys and young men's outward behaviour, such as offending or drug and alcohol use, without questioning the reasons behind it.

Behaviours that may be likely to be recognised as evidence of risk for a girl or young women may be interpreted as a young man experimenting with their sexuality or demonstrating sexually harmful behaviours to others. In addition boys and young men may be less likely to, or find it more difficult to disclose than young women. The same questions should be asked of boys and young men as would be asked of girls and young women. Young men need to be reported missing just as readily as young women and the appropriateness of their relationships needs to be considered openly. Professionals need to provide consistent and reliable support without expectation of disclosure.

Boys and young men are unlikely to disclose for a long time, if ever when other professionals are likely to have tired of 'getting nowhere'.

<http://www.barnardos.org.uk/reducingtherisk>

National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People: Boys and Young Men's Forum <mailto:claire.connor@safeandsoundderby.co.uk>

In the UK, a 2010 study estimated prevalence at about 5% for boys and 18% for girls (not dissimilar to a 1985 study that estimated about 8% for boys and 12% for girls). More than 23,000 incidents were recorded by the UK police between 2009 and 2010. Girls were six times more likely to be assaulted than boys with 86% of attacks taking place against them. Radford ; Lorraine ; Corral ; Susana ; Bradley ; Christine ; Fisher ; Helen ; Bassett ; Claire ; Howat ; Nick and Collishaw ; Stephan (2011). [“Child abuse and neglect in the UK today”](#) (PDF). NSPCC. p.

[5http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/child_abuse_neglect_research_PDF_wdf84181.pdf](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/child_abuse_neglect_research_PDF_wdf84181.pdf). ^ Baker, AW; Duncan, SP (1985). “Child sexual abuse: a study of prevalence in Great Britain”. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 9 (4): 457–67. [doi:10.1016/0145-2134\(85\)90054-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/0145-2134(85)90054-7). [PMID 4084825](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/4084825/).

4.6 Sexual Orientation

A child’s sexual preference may be unclear and remain so into adult life. Because of their age it is less likely that a person under 18 years will be confident about outwardly showing their sexual preference. Each episode of child abuse is assessed on a case by case basis and it may become apparent from the circumstances and during the course of an investigation that sexual orientation of the victim may be a feature of the case.

4.7 Transgender

In common with a number of people in the general population, transgender men and women faced abuse and victimization during childhood. Children who behave differently to what is typical for their gender may be called gender-variant. A child exhibiting gender-variant behaviour may experience some distress about being a girl or a boy, which is known as gender dysphoria. Gender dysphoria is a condition in which a person feels there is a mismatch between their biological sex and their gender identity. Biological sex is assigned at birth, depending on the appearance of the infant. Gender identity is the gender that a person identifies with or feels themselves to be.

Parenting of children where gender identity is affecting a child and helping a child to make the right choices to support their development can be controversial leading to unintended emotional distress that may appear to be abusive. Research suggests there is no fully settled and universally agreed way to resolve the emotional complexities of transgender issues in children. What is agreed is that where the issue is important to a child, gender dysphoria must

be taken into account in any contact by those having statutory responsibility for the child protection matters.

A recent study illustrated that heterosexuals and homosexuals alike who do not express their gender roles according to society are more likely to experience abuse physically, sexually, and psychologically.*

*Andrea L. Roberts, Margaret Rosario, Heather L. Corliss, Karestan C. Koenen and S.Bryn Austin 'Childhood Gender Nonconformity: A Risk Indicator for Child Abuse and Posttraumatic Stress in Youth', Pediatrics Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, February 2012

5. Consultation

Summarise the opinions of any consultation for all or any of the protected groups. Who was consulted and how e.g. survey, discussion, forum.

If there was no consultation please justify why.

Staffordshire Police are represented on the multi agency forums of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) of both Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. Both LSCB's are responsible for the development of policy and procedures for child protection matters. All the agencies that make up the LSCB's support the guidance published on their respective web sites

The development of the LSCB procedures is one of the core functions of each Safeguarding Children Board in its role to co-ordinate local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. They encourage close working between agencies to facilitate early intervention in a supportive way to meet the needs of children and their families. The procedures reflect current legislation, accepted best practice and comply with the government guidance: "Working Together to Safeguard Children" published by the Department for Education and Skills in March 2010. The contents of the LSCB's policy and procedures are for application by those working, whether paid or unpaid, in the Safeguarding Children Board member agencies (which includes Staffordshire Police) and in private or voluntary sector organisations with responsibilities for children living or present in the Stoke-

on-Trent area or County of Staffordshire.

5.1 Age

The Staffordshire Police Child Protection policy and procedures have been prepared to be compliant with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 which is a publication from the Department for Children Schools and Families. The guidance it contains was formulated following consultation with a wide variety of professional and voluntary bodies including representatives from all protected groups.

5.2 Disability

The Staffordshire Police Child Protection policy and procedures have been prepared to be compliant with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 which is a publication from the Department for Children Schools and Families. The guidance it contains was formulated following consultation with a wide variety of professional and voluntary bodies including representatives from all protected groups.

5.3 Race

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5.4 Religion or Belief

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5.5 Sex

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5.7 Transgender

The Staffordshire Police Child Protection policy and procedures have been prepared to be compliant with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 which is a publication from the Department for Children Schools and Families. The guidance it contains was formulated following consultation with a wide variety of professional and voluntary bodies including representatives from all protected groups.

6. Conclusions

Taking into account the results of the monitoring, research and consultation, set out how the policy impacts or could impact on people from the following protected groups? (Include positive and/or negative impacts)

6.1 Age

Age may affect the victims understanding of what is being said or asked of them. In order to minimise the impact on the victim an appropriate interview strategy will be devised that takes account of the age of the victim. This may be visually recording the interview and the introduction of special measures including an intermediary to act in the interests of the victim. This can include confidence building measures about the Court and investigation processes.

Legislation requires that protected groups are considered in the investigation and judicial processes. Section 16 of the Youth Justice & Criminal Evidence Act 1999 (YJCE Act) defines vulnerable as:-

All witnesses under 18 and adult witnesses with mental disorders, learning disabilities or physical disorders/disabilities

During a trial in any Court vulnerable witnesses will be eligible for a video recorded interview, a televised link to the courtroom, screens to shield the witness from the

defendant, removal of wigs and gowns by judges and barristers.

There will also be access to intermediaries who are specialists who can help witnesses with communication difficulties, and aids to communication such as alphabet boards and Makaton symbols and signs. Makaton is a language programme using signs and symbols to help people who have little speech or whose speech is unclear to communicate. It is designed to support spoken language and the signs and symbols are used with speech, in spoken word order. See <http://www.makaton.org>

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) support children through the judicial process

The NSPCC (1998) Young Witness Pack series includes for young witnesses:

Let's Get Ready for Court: An activity booklet for child witnesses aged 5-9

Tell Me More about Court: A book for young witnesses aged 10-15

Inside a Courtroom: A card model of a courtroom with slot-in characters, for use with younger witnesses

Going to Court: Information and advice for Crown Court Witnesses aged 13-17

Young Witnesses at the Magistrates' Court and the Youth Court: For 9-17 year olds

Screens in Court: An information sheet for 9-17 year olds

NSPCC (2000). *Giving Evidence, What's It Like? – a video addition to the Young Witness Pack (1998)*. NSPCC

6.2 Disability

As with 6.1 above disability may affect the victims understanding of what is being said or asked of them. In order to minimise the impact on the victim an appropriate interview strategy will be devised that takes account of the disability of the victim. This may be recording interviews, introducing special measures such as an intermediary to help with communication and to act in the interests of the victim. This can include confidence building measures about the Court and investigation process.

Legislation requires that protected groups are considered in the investigation and judicial processes. Section 16 of the Youth Justice & Criminal Evidence Act 1999 (YJCE Act) defines vulnerable as:-

All witnesses under 18 and adult witnesses with mental disorders, learning disabilities or physical disorders/disabilities

During a trial in any Court vulnerable witnesses will be eligible for a video recorded interview, a televised link to the courtroom, screens to shield the witness from the defendant, removal of wigs and gowns by judges and barristers.

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6.3 Race

All police staff should be aware of the cultural issues present in dealing with minority groups and the affect these may have on the victims of child abuse. The following must be taken into consideration:

- Sexuality or just being a victim may be a subject which cannot be spoken about openly in some minority communities
- The victim may not have confidence in the Criminal Justice System
- The victim may not be able to get support from their family for a number of reasons arising from cultural norms and a perceived stigma associated with being a victim particularly a victim of a sexual offence
- An individual or their family may become ostracised by their peer community
- Interpreters should come from another area to reduce the risk of the incident becoming common knowledge throughout the community. The use of various dialects may also be a problem for an interpreter;

6.4 Religion or Belief

The victim may be fearful of both the investigation, which can cause embarrassment, exhaustion or guilt and the reaction of family according to their religious norms. Many victims feel an element of self-blame. Reassurance is crucial to obtaining vital information to assist enquiries and bring offenders to justice. These factors are taken into account by

officers interviewing child victims when interviews are being planned.

See : *Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings: Guidance on vulnerable and intimidated witnesses including children.*

Internet link: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/ach-bect-evidence/

6.5 Sex

As detailed in section 4.5, the sexual exploitation of boys and young men does take place. The Department of Children Schools and Families (DCSF) 2009, supported by research in the field acknowledges boys and young men, as well as girls and young women can be sexually exploited. In addition boys and young men may be less likely to, or find it more difficult to disclose than young women. The same questions should be asked of boys and young men as would be asked of girls and young women. Young men need to be reported missing just as readily as young women and the appropriateness of their relationships needs to be considered openly. Professionals need to provide consistent and reliable support without expectation of disclosure.

6.6 Sexual Orientation

Each episode of child abuse is assessed on a case by case basis and it may become apparent from the circumstances and during the course of an investigation that sexual orientation of the victim may be feature of the case.

6.7 Transgender

Transgender victims may feel they are less likely to be believed. Officers must offer reassurance and ensure their fears are allayed. Members of the Trans community must be addressed appropriately in accordance with their transgender status. All victims should be dealt with sensitively in accordance within their own cultural norms where possible.

7. Decisions

If the policy will have a negative impact on members of one or more of the protected groups, explain how the policy will change or why it is to continue in the same way. If no changes are proposed, the policy needs to be objectively justified.

The policy will not have a negative impact on any of the protected groups. The policy

and its supporting procedures are designed to take account of members of recognised protected groups

8. Monitoring arrangements

If the policy is new what consideration has been given to piloting the policy?

If monitoring is not already in place what arrangements have been made to monitor the effects of the policy on equality and diversity?

The policy is not new; the Child Protection Policy is the most recent update based on current best practice guidance. Child Protection arrangements within Staffordshire Police are immersed in partnership work which are currently developed to a mature level in conjunction with Local Safeguarding Childrens Board's from both Stoke on Trent Local Authority and Staffordshire County Council

Staffordshire Police are committed to ensuring that our policies and working practices are working to achieve our priorities. To monitor performance and development in this area the Force engages in the following quality assurance processes:

- Audits and reviews.
- Serious Case Reviews.
- Organisation learning / peer review.
- Multi-agency working.
- Local Safeguarding Children Boards.
- Professional Standards Department.
- External reviews and inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary (HMIC) and Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OfSTED)

This equality impact assessment will be published on the force website.

EIA Form Dated
01/11/11