# **Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership**



Complex Safeguarding Strategy 2023 - 2025

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#### **Foreword**

Bury's Let's Do It Strategy sets an ambition for the borough to be a place in which people are helped to make the best of themselves.

Most young people in Bury grow up in a safe and loving home environment, have good health and have the support and opportunities that give them the best start in life that means that they can make the best of themselves. However, we know things can be tough for young people; there are lots of challenges for them in the world and they may be faced with a new set of complex risks posed by peers or adults unconnected to families. These risks negatively impact on their health and development, family and peer relationships, school and community environments and the safety of online platforms.

We use the term Complex Safeguarding to describe our approach to concerns of exploitation and/or safeguarding concerns beyond a domestic setting.

Whilst exploitation is abuse, we recognise the importance of assessment of, and intervention with, social conditions beyond families to increase the safety of young people. Our strategy aims to bring safeguarding (children and adults), community safety and education welfare closer together – taking a safeguarding led approach, but community safety and policing informed response to exploitation in all its forms.

As a partnership, we know that exploitation doesn't stop when young people reach 18. In fact, it doesn't start in some cases until 18. We will develop closer working with Bury Safeguarding Adults Board to safeguard young people across transitions, so that we continue to protect young adults from harm.

The Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership want children and young people to achieve the best in life and to feel safe and secure in their families and communities. This will be achieved by supporting:

- Children and young people grow up safely.
- Children and young people feel safe in families that care for them.
- Children, young people and families know where to go if they need help.

Partners have worked together to develop this Strategy, informed by the work of our Independent Scrutineer, and bringing together our shared experience, knowledge and what we are told by children, young people and families.

The strategy describes how the Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership will identify complex and contextual safeguarding risk, how we will ensure we deliver services to reduce risk and how we know we've made a difference. This will ensure children and young people are in a safe environment, know how to keep safe, and have help to make the best of themselves.

#### 1. Introduction

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) reflects the complex risks that children and young people face, which is primarily, although not exclusively, outside of the family. These extrafamilial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or within the wider community and/or online. These threats can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including Child Criminal Exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines; trafficking; modern slavery; online abuse; honour-based violence; Child Sexual Exploitation and abuse; serious youth violence including knife crime; and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.

In response, the strategy considers the wider contextual safeguarding dynamics to understand and respond to young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families including their peer relationships, schools, online and within their communities; and for these dynamics to be considered and addressed within multiagency safeguarding practices.

Complex Safeguarding is one of the strategic priorities for the Bury Safeguarding Partnership. Complex Safeguarding is a term that encompasses a range of safeguarding issues that children and young people face, those related to criminality and exploitation. In Bury, we use the Greater Manchester definition of Complex Safeguarding, based on the <u>Joint Targeted Area Inspection Guidance</u> on multi-agency response to the criminal exploitation of children:

"Criminal activity (often organised), or behaviour associated to criminality, involving vulnerable children/young people, where there is exploitation and/or a clear implied safeguarding concern."

### 2. Vision

The Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership's vision is to ensure that all children and young people enjoy safe childhoods and are protected from harm, so that they grow up with the strength to overcome difficulties and to be able to make the most of life's opportunities.

We want all children in Bury who are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse to be effectively identified and protected by services which are delivered in a co-ordinated and informed way that consistently responds to the risks and improves the outcomes for our children, their families, and the wider community.

### 3. The Regional Context Across Greater Manchester

In Greater Manchester exploitation has increased over time for both child and adult victims. Between 2021 and 2022, around 500 victims were referred to the National Referral Mechanism for exploitation in Greater Manchester. Two thirds of people referred for exploitation were male (67%).

For child victims, child criminal exploitation has increased rapidly in particular forced drug dealing. Child sexual exploitation has been steadily rising over time, which is partly due to a better understanding of child sexual exploitation and professionals knowing where and how to report it.

Labour exploitation is very low for children, as is domestic servitude and cannabis cultivation, with perpetrators likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Whilst the exact figure regarding young people affected by county lines operations is currently unknown, we know that when children and young people are targeted, males between 15 and 17 years old are the most identified victims of county lines exploitation (NCA, 2019). However, children who do not fall into this age category and females do still fall victim to County Lines exploitation.

### 4. Intelligence

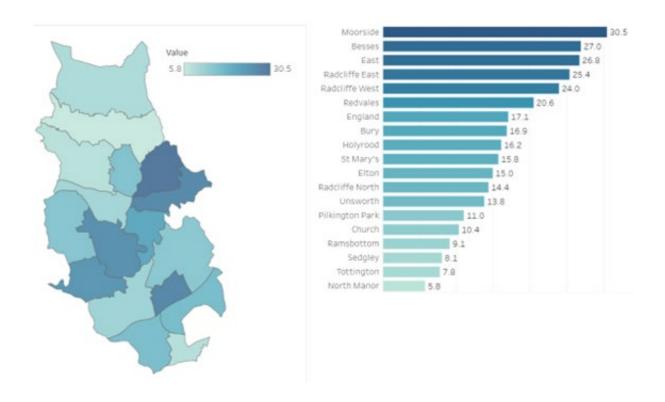
### **Demographics**

Bury has a population of 193,800 people. There are 43,878 children and young people aged from 0-17 in Bury, which is 23% of the total population. This demographic isn't evenly spread across the Borough, for instance, the figure is as high as 31% in Sedgley (Prestwich) where 9.4% of the ward's population are aged 4 or under.

Bury is home to a large array of communities across our six towns, including a significant Southeast Asian community towards the East of the Borough, whilst to the south of the Borough are growing Jewish communities across Prestwich and into Salford and Manchester districts. Through Bury's inclusive practices, the shaping and access to services and engagement is tailored to recognise and value our different communities.

Similarly, the underlying conditions our young people grow up in are also variable across the Borough. Bury is ranked 83rd most income-deprived out of 317 localities nationally and has become relatively more deprived compared to other areas with more people living in (the same) areas of deprivation in 2019 than in 2015 and the pandemic likely to have compounded this further. Within the Borough there are areas of significant and entrenched deprivation which can be a risk factor not only to a child's development but also in terms of vulnerability to socio-economically induced

exploitation. The map below shows the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index from the Index of Multiple Deprivation, with peak pressures to the East of Bury Town Centre, Besses (Whitefield) and Radcliffe.



#### **Complex Safeguarding Activity**

At the time of writing this strategy the picture for Bury is broadly as expected for this population of Greater Manchester. The activity as of the summer 2023 is:

51 children are open to the Complex Safeguarding Team.

Child Criminal Exploitation – 22 children

Child Sexual Exploitation – 29 children

Split 49% male - 51% female

48% are 15-16yrs; youngest 11, oldest 17yrs

11 years old – 5%

12 years old – 7%

13 years old - 22%

14 years old - 12%

15 years old - 24%

16 years old - 24%

17 years old - 5%

22% have additional needs (SEN or LD)

Child Criminal Exploitation tends to range from low level crime, anti-social behaviour to the more serious drug dealing.

Online Child Sexual Exploitation accounts for 34% of the CSE cases.

The borough has seen an increase in Looked After Children from Oldham & Trafford who have been moved into Bury by CSC.

In our ongoing efforts to enhance understanding and respond effectively and manage risk, we have commissioned a Complex Safeguarding problem profile. This profile will provide clear evidence-based understanding of the complex safeguarding landscape in our community.

National and Greater Manchester intelligence, Bury's unique problem profiling along with robust performance reporting will provide the evidence of the effectiveness of local intervention and support the development of targeted strategies and resource allocation.

### 5. What Our Young People Have Told Us

Developing a culture whereby children, young people and families have a strong voice and co-produce developments and services that affect them is fundamental to Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership. Working closely with Bury's Children and Young People Strategic Partnership, we want to ensure that children, young people and families to have the opportunity to be fully engaged and valued as equal partners in the design, development and review of services that they use.

We will use the lived experience of children and young people who are at risk of or who have been exploited to support us to develop our knowledge and shape our future practice.

In the development of this strategy, we have listened to the voice of young people who have experienced complex safeguarding risk.

#### They told us that:

- They were tired of having to tell their story to numerous professionals and nothing ever changed.
- They needed that one person who really believed in them to listen and not judge.
- They were tired of being seen as a 'case' or 'victim' they just wanted to be seen without the attachment of a label.
- They needed people to be calm around them, claiming their lives can be confusing, anxious, and scary!
- They wanted to see passion and creativity in engagement not just ticking a box to say they've been seen.
- They want to be listened to, really listened to!

### 6. Strategic Objectives

To ensure Bury delivers the vision set out in section 2 it is essential that there is a system which supports working together effectively and holding each other to account in an open, constructive, and honest manner.

A critical focus of this strategy will be on how young people can be better protected and supported by a wide range of individuals and services in a variety of contexts. This will include ensuring we enable young people to engage with these services when they need them.

This strategy will seek to reduce inequalities and contribute to the Bury Safeguarding Children's Partnership outcomes:

#### Priorities 1 and 2.

- ✓ "Understand emerging safeguarding risks to young people today, specifically complex safeguarding".
- ✓ "Needs are identified and responded to at the earliest opportunity, by ensuring the Neglect Strategy is embedded into partnership working".

We have set out seven clear strategic objectives for 2023 to 2025, which have been informed by the work of the Independent Scrutineer during 2022/2023 and these will be underpinned by a delivery plan that holds partners to account to fulfil the actions set out across our priority areas:

- 1 ) Embed clear governance and assurance arrangements
  - 2 ) Increase our awareness and understanding of Complex Safeguarding
    - 3 Joint training and development opportunities, practice tools, guidance, and resources
    - 4 Co-ordinated multi-agency response to children and young people at risk of exploitation
    - 5 Co-ordinated multi-agency response to children and young people who go missing
  - 6 Greater success in detection, disruption, and prosecution
- 7 ) Work alongside and within communities to tackle exploitation

### 7. Local Approach

The Complex Safeguarding Team (CST) is a multi-agency team comprising of Greater Manchester Police Officers, Bury Children's Services and representatives from the NHS and a Trusted Psychologist. We work with wider partners from the Bury area such as Early Break, Youth Justice, and Youth Services. The office is situated within the Haven (Police Station) which has a video interview suite attached. There is also a dedicated young person's room which can be utilised for supporting children.

The Complex Safeguarding Team provides a single point of access in Bury for concerns about vulnerable children and young people who have complex needs or might be at risk of harm. It is a team of co-located safeguarding partners with access to information and case recording systems, which work together to screen these concerns and make judgments of the appropriate pathway or outcome for concerns presented to them.

The team draws on best practice and research both regionally and nationally, guided by the agreed Operating Principles. The team provide a strengths-based, trauma-informed model of working with children and caregivers. The young person will always have an allocated statutory social worker, working alongside an allocated Complex Safeguarding social worker, planning in tandem for safety, permanence, and best outcomes.

The initial phase of intervention focuses on building a positive, trusting relationship between the Complex Safeguarding worker and child, progressing at the child's pace and reviewed within individual and joint supervision. Understanding risks and potential harm and how the team can reduce this is critical in the early stages of the relationship.

Immediate safety is the priority and understanding that collaboratively with the allocated social work team is key. In addition to this, there will be the offer of the parenting worker and case formulation from the Trauma Informed Psychotherapist to fully capture right intervention planning.

A police officer will work alongside the CST social worker to build a trusted relationship with the child and provide a single point of contact. An officer will be allocated and will remain allocated to the child until the investigation is complete.

The police will use all lawful policing powers and investigative tools to safeguard the child and identify, apprehend, and bring offenders to justice. These will be proportional to the investigation whilst acknowledging child exploitation is serious crime that causes serious harm to victims.

The CST nurse will support with all medical requirements. Ensuring the child's GP and other Health linked professionals are updated to the involvement of the Complex Safeguarding Team and will feed into the overall care planning for the child.

Every child or young person who is referred to the team is offered a health assessment, and this can be in the young person's home, in the community, in school or college or some young people choose to meet me in the Haven. Physical health

needs are addressed, signposting and referrals are made to children are supported to attend appointments.

The team support the children and young people with emotional health, depression screening and onward referrals are then made as required into mental health services. The team support further assessment and screening for Autistic Spectrum Conditions and ADHD.

The team have professionals experienced in supporting parents and carers with practical advice and a parenting toolkit.

Volunteers play a critical role in Bury and are present across the borough, with some clustering around areas of greatest deprivation. Many groups within Bury offer the possibility of engagement with hard-to-reach groups as they are connected within their local community. There is representation from the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector in our Complex Safeguarding sub-group of our partnership to ensure we can reach into all corners of our populations within our borough.

Feedback from some of our young people after working with our Complex Safeguarding Team:

- "It made me open my eyes, see things differently made me double think before doing anything. Made me focus on my future."
- "It taught me in the longer term I had more to lose than to gain. The information provided is helping me now to grow."
- "I felt better in myself because I had somebody to speak too! For the first time in a long time, I feel I can be 'normal' and achieve whatever I want."

There are a number of supporting strategies used in Bury to tackle exploitation and deliver effective complex safeguarding arrangements including:

- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategic Threat Risk Assessment (2023)
- Greater Manchester Serious Violence Duty Strategic Needs Assessment (2023)
- Standing Together (Police, Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan) 2022-2025
- Greater Manchester Gender Based Violence Strategy
- Northwest ADASS Young People and Adults Complex Safeguarding Strategy 2022 – 2023
- Burv and Rochdale Youth Justice Plan
- Bury Children and Young People's Plan 2021-24 'Let's Do It for Children and Young People'

### 8. Intelligence, Disruption and Crime Management

Local intelligence is of importance for safeguarding and identifying children at risk and identifying offenders. Intelligence is managed by Greater Manchester Police.

Intelligence can be generated by the police from a range of sources; systems, ongoing incidents, crime stoppers, etc and by partner agencies working with children or the local community.

Partners can input intelligence to GMP via the intelligence submission report that is sent into the Bury Complex Safeguarding Team.

Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWNs) are issued to individuals ('suspects') who are believed to place a young person (the 'subject') at risk of offences being committed against them under appropriate legislation. This procedure is aimed at tackling those incidences where young people, under the age of 16 years (or under 18 if in local authority care), who are at risk of significant harm due to their association with others. Who are sometimes much older than them.

Police will also conduct out of hours checks where required for hotspots and will work with partner agencies to identify and reduce risk to the public. Where needed we will work with Licensing or Neighbourhood policing to target CSE hotspot locations and consider using police powers where required.

#### Crime Management

All crimes are recorded as per the national crime recording standards. All crimes are investigated as per the PIP1 or PIP2 investigation policy by suitable trained and accredited officers. Where any links to organised, crime are identified by the police or partner agencies then the Challenger Organised Crime Team will assess and investigate as required as per the policy and procedures of Operation Challenger.

### 9. Key Principles of Practice

To achieve our strategic objectives, we have adopted the 7 key principles of practice and service developed by Greater Manchester, to drive change, improve the multiagency response to Complex Safeguarding and to inform delivery of our services:

- Young people should be at the centre; their developmental needs and their strengths must drive our response.
- Context matters: young people need a holistic approach.
- Exploitation is complex therefore the response cannot be linear or simple.
- No agency can address exploitation in isolation, collaboration is essential.
- Knowledge is crucial to keep children safe.
- Communities and families are valuable assets and may also need support.
- Equip and support the workforce; effective services require resilient practitioners.

These principles are aligned to Bury's neighbourhood model of delivering integrated public services and empowering local people in our neighbourhoods, taking a whole

system approach to risk – in this case to address offenders of harm, victims/those at risk of harm, and place-based vulnerabilities that increase the risk of harm.

### 10. Roles and Responsibilities

Strategic leaders, frontline workers, volunteers, and active citizens all have a role to protect those at risk of exploitation and safeguarding people from harm, each having responsibility for safeguarding our children and young people.

#### Responsibility of Organisations

- The Safeguarding Executive and the Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership should be informed of issues and should respond timely to improvement suggestions.
- Partnership members should raise awareness of complex safeguarding issues amongst the workforce and those children, young people, and adults they engage with.
- Staff, volunteers and beneficiaries should know how to recognise the signs of exploitation, and to know what actions to take.
- Services should be providing the right support and intervention for survivors, at the right time.
- Services should positively contribute to prevention and disruption joining partners shared solutions where appropriate.
- Partnership members should support connectivity across services, to promote understanding, knowledge and sharing best practice

#### Responsibility of Individuals

- To know what sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and modern slavery and human trafficking is and to know the signs of such exploitation.
- To know how to refer people at risk to services to safeguard them for example the National Referral Mechanism or the Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship Service (for Modern Slavery and trafficking)
- To share your knowledge and expertise with your colleagues and partners.
- To do everything you can to safeguard survivors and prevent future harm.
- To know the range and role of services working to support and safeguard those at risk of exploitation and survivors.
- To take responsibility to keep up to date on policy and practice.
- To act upon issues or concerns in your communities.
- To actively access training and support.

#### 11. Governance

Complex Safeguarding requires professionals to work collaboratively – both internally and externally, across the partnership and the region. The team is represented at the GM Steering group and senior colleagues with the remit of CST are represented at the Bury Children's Strategic Partnership. The Executive officer in the Partnership with overall strategic lead for CST is our local GMP Chief Superintendent.

Complex Safeguarding Subgroup is one of four subgroups of the Bury Safeguarding Partnership, chaired by our local GMP Superintendent, takes place fortnightly.

A Monthly Partnership meeting takes place to share information and strengthen multi agency understanding of current themes and trends across Bury which is attended by Statutory and Non-Statutory Agencies. Actions will be identified as appropriate and inform ongoing review of our Delivery Plan.

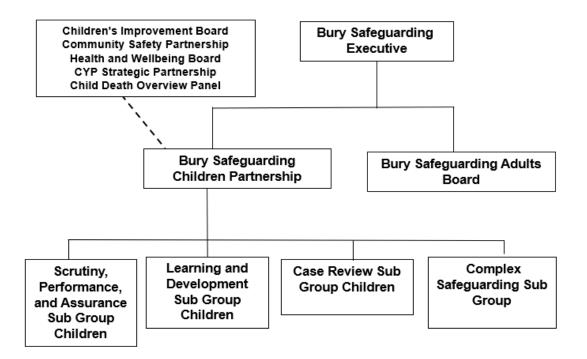
Monthly performance data is reviewed at the monthly performance meeting AIM, chaired by the DCS. It is also shared and discussed in the multi-agency arrangements.

Bury provide data to the Complex Safeguarding Performance Framework for Greater Manchester on a quarterly basis to contribute to the picture across the whole of Greater Manchester, understanding cross border and regional themes.

Practice is informed through the Greater Manchester Complex Safeguarding Steering Group which meets 6 weekly and shares and develops models of practice and intervention. Practice also draws on national research.

Bury's Safeguarding Executive hold the Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership to account for delivery of this strategy.

This strategy is subject to regular review by the sub-group and its effectiveness is monitored through an established set of measures and indicators based on evidencing results. Governance in relation to transitions of children to adults will be through the Bury Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Bury Safeguarding Adults Board working together.



### 12. Measuring Impact and Effectiveness

We will use a range of management and performance information to assess effectiveness and impacts on children and young people in Bury

We will listen to the voice of children and young people.

We will use the lived experience of children and young people who are at risk of or who have been exploited to support us to develop our knowledge and shape our future practice.

We will listen to the voice of the workforce.

We will listen to our staff to shape our future practice.

We will establish outcome indicators to measure long term sustainable change.

We will record our progress and improvements against the outcome measures, and we will evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy in safeguarding children and young people at risk of exploitation.

We will use partner agencies monitoring data to improve the quality of decision making, learning, accountability, and continual improvement.

The strategy will be underpinned by a detailed outcomes framework which will measure the effectiveness of all actions under the core principles and priorities of the strategy.

#### We will support performance-based accountability.

We will evaluate the impact of our action plan by developing performance and quality measures that will be reported into the Complex Safeguarding Sub-group.

We will design systems to deliver 'value work', e.g., services being delivered 'right first time', streamlined so children /young people and their families do not feel overwhelmed with agency contact.

It is important that we do not see success as just data and numbers, but that all our work is rooted in having a visible and tangible impact on people's lives and evidence that we are making a difference for them and their long-term outcomes.

#### 13. Resources and Guidance

We are determined to protect children and young people at risk of exploitation and to help them get the help they need. We are equally determined to support families to help them understand the impact exploitation has upon their child.

If you have any concerns about these issues or you know someone who is being exploited in this way, please contact the Police on 999 if there is an immediate threat to a person or people.

If there is no immediate danger, or you need advice or information, you can telephone Bury's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub on 0161 253 5678 (outside normal office hours 0161 253 6606) or if you are a professional you can complete this form.

For up-to-date information and resources please see the Bury Safeguarding Partnership website: https://burysafeguardingpartnership.bury.gov.uk/

## 14. Definitions

Complex	Complex Safeguarding is criminal activity (often organised), or
Safeguarding	behaviour associated with criminality, involving children and
	young adults (often vulnerable) where there is exploitation and/or
	a clear or implied safeguarding concern.
	Joint Targeted Area Inspection Guidance (Ofsted, 2022)
Contextual	Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to safeguarding children
Safeguarding	and young people that responds to their experiences of harm
	outside of the home.
	Research In Practice (2019)
Transitional	Transitional Safeguarding is a term used to highlight the need
Safeguarding	to improve the safeguarding response to older teenagers and
	young adults in a way that recognises their developmental
	needs.
	Research In Practice (2019)
County Lines	Is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks
	involved in exporting illegal drugs into one of more importing
	areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other
	form of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and
	vulnerable adults to move [and store] the drugs and money and
	they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including
	sexual violence) and weapons.
Child Sexual	Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs
Exploitation	where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of
	power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person
	under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for
	something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial
	advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity
	appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always
	involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of
	technology." (Home Office)
Child Criminal	Child Criminal Exploitation occurs where an individual or group
Exploitation	takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control,
•	manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of
	18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the
	victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other
	advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through
	violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been
	criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child

	Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.	
Modern Slavery	Modern slavery is the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children, young people, or adults using force, coercion, and abuse of vulnerability, deception, or other means for the purpose of exploitation. Individuals may be trafficked into, out of or within the UK, and they may be trafficked for several reasons including sexual exploitation, forced labour, domestic servitude or the removal of organs.	
	<ul> <li>Someone is in slavery if they are:</li> <li>Forced to work – through coercion, or mental or physical threat.</li> <li>Owned or controlled by an 'employer', through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse.</li> <li>Dehumanised, treated as a commodity, or bought and sold as 'property'.</li> <li>Physically constrained or have restrictions placed on their freedom of movement.</li> <li>Modern Slavery Act (2015)</li> </ul>	
	Modern slavery is a human rights violation and has severe consequences for the health and wellbeing of survivors. It is an exploitative crime that impacts on physical and mental health and has public health implication. Home Office	
Human Trafficking	<b>Human trafficking</b> involves the recruitment or movement of people for exploitation by the use of threat, force, fraud, or the abuse of vulnerability. Trafficking is a crime that can occur across international borders or within a country. It often crosses multiple geographic and legal boundaries. Home Office	
Missing from Home or Care	5 5 1	
	and where the circumstances are out of character, or the context suggests the person may be the subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another.	

	<b>Absent</b> – A person not at a place where they are expected or required to be and where the circumstances and context suggest there is a lower level of risk.
Children Missing Education	Children missing education are children who are of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving a suitable education otherwise. Children missing education are at risk of underachieving, being at risk of harm, exploitation or radicalisation and becoming NEET (not in Education, Employment or Training) later in life.  Local Authorities have a duty under the Education Act 1996 to make arrangements to establish the identities of children in their area who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving a suitable education otherwise.
	Those children identified as not receiving a suitable education should be returned to school or alternative provision.
Honour Based Violence	Honour-based violence (HBV) is the term used to refer to a collection of practices used predominantly to control the behaviour of women and girls within families or other social groups in order to protect supposed cultural and religious beliefs, values and social norms in the name of 'honour'. HBV incidents and crimes include specific types of offence, such as forced marriage (FM) and female genital mutilation (FGM), and acts which have long been criminalised, such as assault, rape and murder.
	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (2022)