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# Salford's Joint Exploitation Strategy

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Salford City Council

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# Vision

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**Our vision is for all children, young people, and adults in Salford to feel safe and protected from the risk of exploitation. We aim to ensure that those who are vulnerable to abuse have clear pathways of support rooted in the local community. We aim to have a whole system that works together to improve the outcomes for those at risk of, or experiencing exploitation.**



# Introduction

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This Exploitation Strategy has been developed as a joint initiative between the Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP), the Salford Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) and the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). It sets out Salford's understanding of how exploitation affects people at different times of their lives and how partners will work together to improve the lives of those at risk. This strategy should be considered alongside the Exploitation Subgroup Work Plan which details key actions to be taken to deliver against the identified objectives.

The 3 partnerships have an inter board protocol which outlines governance arrangements for each board priorities given they often overlap. Exploitation is broad and so under this the 3 partnerships have subdivided the themes of exploitation and identified which partnership leads each theme.

This strategy draws upon the principles from the ADASS Young People and Adults Complex Safeguarding Strategy 2022-2023 and learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR's), Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) and Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs).

The Northwest definition of Complex Safeguarding features an element of criminal exploitation along with other safeguarding factors which may include substance misuse, domestic abuse, previous trauma, homelessness, learning disability, mental health, transition from children's services, sensory impairment, acquired brain injury. It is recognised that wider structural and economic inequalities and other variables will mean that risks and harms will change over time, and new safeguarding issues will present, and so no exhaustive definition is appropriate or desirable.

At the national and regional level Complex Safeguarding has focused on tackling the exploitation of young people and adults without a defined definition. This strategy recognises that those who seek to abuse and exploit young people and adults do so by targeting their vulnerability, regardless of age. Social and environmental factors that enable the exploitation of young people continue into adulthood.

Modern Slavery can be defined as **when an individual is exploited by others, for personal or commercial gain, and loses their freedom**. As such, for the purposes of this strategy, modern slavery is not discussed as a separate form of exploitation but is instead considered an umbrella term, which can cover many forms of exploitation including:

- Sexual Exploitation - abuse of a position of vulnerability, power, or trust, for sexual purposes leading to financial or social gain.
- Financial Exploitation - abuse of a position of vulnerability, power, or trust, to deceive or coerce a young person or adult into handing over money or assets through fraud or blackmail.
- Human Trafficking - organised recruitment and movement of individuals through coercion or abuse for the purpose of exploitation including compulsory labour.
- Criminal Exploitation - abuse of a position of vulnerability, power, or trust to groom or coerce a young person or adult to engage in criminal activity, including County Lines drugs networks.
- Cuckooing - abuse of a position of vulnerability, power, or trust to use an adult's property for criminal activities and financial gain.

# Local context

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In Salford, we recognise that safeguarding children, young people and adults from exploitation can only be achieved by inter-agency and community partnership working and not in isolation. Multiple agencies may be required to work together, often supporting young people and adults who, due to their situation, struggle to engage with support and may be suffering from trauma. Forms of exploitation also expand to include those who have been exploited moving on to, or being coerced to, exploit other vulnerable people, blurring the boundary between trauma victim and abuser.

Similar to other areas, Salford has seen an increase in the numbers of people being exploited, and the sophistication of methods used to draw people in. Ours is an evolving approach based on cases that Salford is currently experiencing and will be refined as we expand our multi agency data and intelligence.

This strategy sets out Salford's ambition for a whole-system response to all forms of exploitation. The challenges and aims set out in this strategy will direct our work to improve the response to exploitation in the long-term. Exploitation has been identified as a priority area for the statutory safeguarding boards and partnerships in Salford. In response, the Exploitation subgroup was established in 2019. The Group oversees practice to ensure that all children and adults affected are effectively safeguarded in Salford.

The CSP, SSCP and SSAB welcome this strategy which sets out how the system intends to achieve specific improvements in respect of the work of all agencies who work with those affected by exploitation in Salford. The strategy also sets out the multi-agency commitments, including the sharing of intelligence and working beyond traditional geographical, age and statutory boundaries, to ensure a whole system response designed to tackle all forms of exploitation in Salford.



# Strategic business priorities (2023-2026)

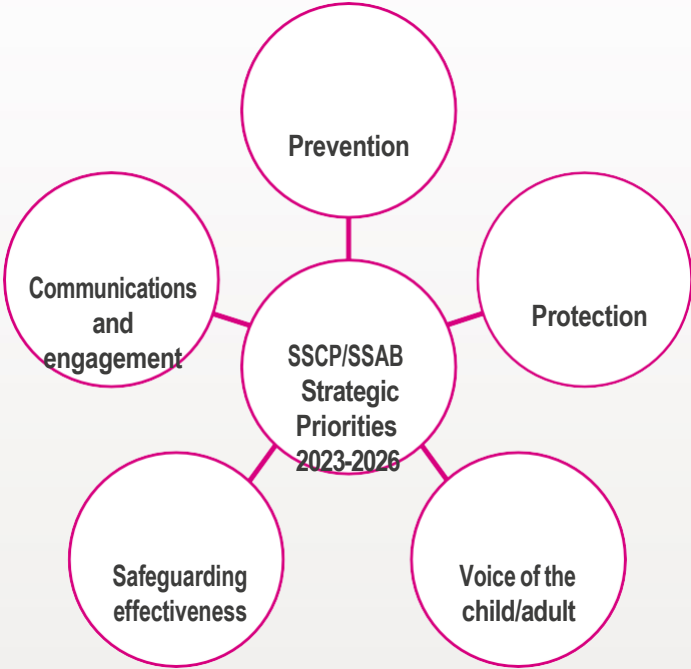
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All Salford Citizens, regardless of their background, deserve high quality and effective support, as soon as a need is identified. Professionals working with young people and adults in Salford take their responsibility to keep them safe very seriously. All partners are committed to working together so that every young person and adult is safe, well and able to reach their full potential.

The priorities of the Community Safety Partnership include our commitment to protect vulnerable people, and the CSP will work in partnership with the respective safeguarding partnerships to support and protect vulnerable children and adults who are at risk of exploitation in all its forms. This is a multi-agency response focusing on protecting those at risk from sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation, organised crime and modern slavery.

We will robustly respond to the growing problem of gangs recruiting young people and exploiting them to their own ends, trafficking them across 'county lines'. We deem this child criminal exploitation (CCE) and the Community Safety Partnership through Project Gulf and the GMP campaign "Trapped" will continue to tackle this crime and support young people to cease being exploited.

In April 2023, the SSAB and SSCP came together to align strategic business priorities to ensure a consistent approach to safeguarding in Salford. The work of every subgroup is organised around these priority areas.



# Salford's approach to tackling exploitation

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The purpose of the Salford Exploitation subgroup is to provide assurance to the CSP, SSCP and SSAB that matters of exploitation in Salford are being appropriately dealt with, in line with our vision to improve outcomes for children, young people and adults, whilst disrupting and prosecuting perpetrators. Exploitation in Salford is identified through different strands of safeguarding.

This group aims to recognise emerging exploitation matters and proactively safeguard children, young people and adults. It will have a shared and collective understanding of issues and experiences of those at risk, with a commitment to sharing intelligence across the partnership.

The subgroup will support the work of the CSP, SSCP and SSAB which is:

- To co-ordinate what is done by individual agencies for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk in Salford
- To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.

The subgroup should co-ordinate a multi-agency and integrated response to exploitation for both children and adults at risk in the areas of;

- Child and Adult Criminal Exploitation
- Child and Adult Sexual Exploitation
- Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking

The Exploitation subgroup also provides strategic oversight of the Connect Team.

The Connect Team is a co-located multi agency team that works with children, young people and adults who are involved or a victim of criminal exploitation. This team has been operational since January 2019 and supports those affected by all forms of exploitation, including Sexual Exploitation, Criminal Exploitation, Cuckooing and Modern Slavery. The team's logo was designed in partnership with a young person and supported its name change from "Complex Safeguarding Hub" to the "Connect Team" in November 2021.

The Connect Team is Salford's response to the exploitation of children, young people and adults which offers consultation to professionals where there are concerns. All consultations and referrals are considered at a daily multi agency governance meeting. Salford Connect will accept referrals where there is evidence of grooming and/or exploitation or the risks of exploitation surrounding the child/young person/adult are deemed complex or they have vulnerabilities and they are unable to protect themselves. Where a child/young person/adult is not accepted by the Connect Team, a full rationale will be provided by the Connect Team Manager, to the referrer and recommendations of alternative services and opportunities will be provided.

Salford Connect Social Workers co-work cases alongside statutory social workers where a risk or need is identified.

For children - A WISE assessment tool (Working to Increase Safety and Stability in Exploitation) will be completed by the Connect Social Worker within 30 days and updated every three months to identify any strengths and aspirations for the child. The Connect social worker will aim to develop a trusted relationship with the young person using a strengths based, relational approach. All interventions will be individualised to the young person. The statutory social worker will be responsible for the safeguarding plan with the support from Salford Connect.

A Salford Connect Police Officer will be allocated to every young person or adult open to the team who will remain allocated throughout the duration of the investigation. They will endeavour to meet the young person/adult, to offer reassurance, develop relationships and to investigate any crimes as appropriate and to seek opportunities for disruption of exploitation.

When an adult is open to a social care practitioner and The Salvation Army is not utilised, a Multi-Disciplinary Meeting (MDT) will be arranged to ensure information is shared and partners work together to undertake a risk assessment and support planning (when required) to ensure the safety of the adult.

The approach to tackling exploitation in Salford has evolved and diversified to support adult victims of exploitation. The multi-agency safeguarding partnerships in Salford are committed to ensuring that there is a robust approach to support and risk management for all those affected by exploitation, regardless of their age.





# Priority one

## Preventing exploitation

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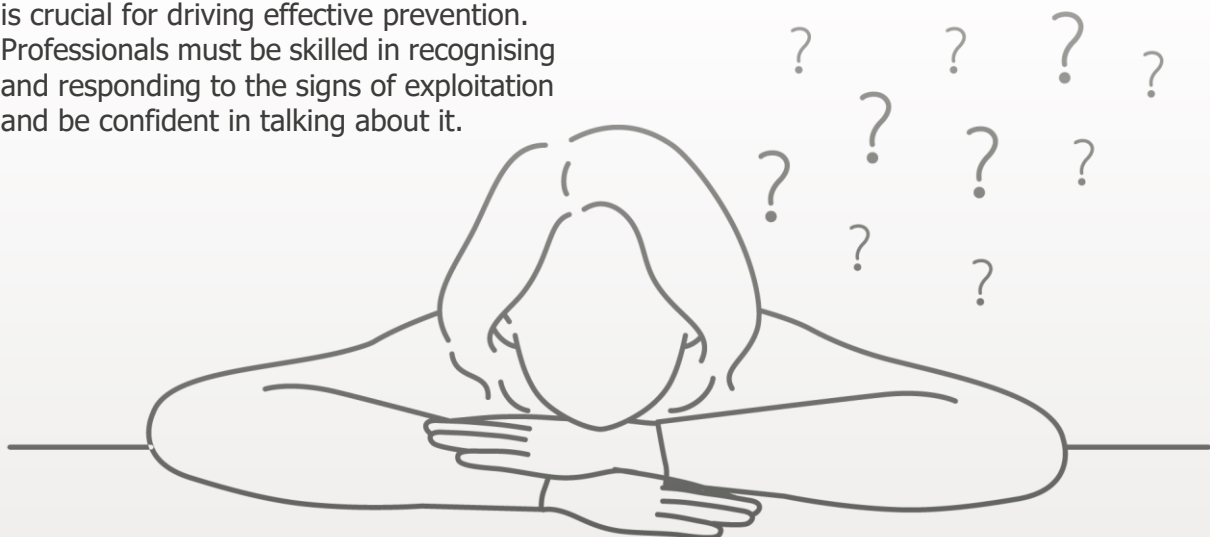
**“We want everyone who comes into contact with young people and adults to recognise when they are vulnerable to exploitation and know how to respond. We want to prevent exploitation from happening, so that all young people and adults in Salford are safe and able to reach their full potential.”**

In Salford, we will adopt a whole system approach to tackling Exploitation, underpinned by the key principle that “Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility”. The central aim of our whole system approach is to prevent Exploitation from happening at all. To do this, we must ensure that all agencies providing services are equipped with the right safeguarding knowledge and skills to intervene as early as possible. Effective prevention must involve partners across all sectors and work at local, national and international levels.

Having a robust understanding of exploitation is crucial for driving effective prevention. Professionals must be skilled in recognising and responding to the signs of exploitation and be confident in talking about it.

Prevention also includes raising awareness through communications and engagement activity. This is detailed under Priority 3.

Greater Manchester Police and the Integrated Care Board have jointly commissioned a piece of research to conduct a needs analysis of the adult provision in Salford. This will support us in understanding the local demographic and ensure effective targeting of resources.



## Actions to be taken

- Undertake a training needs analysis to understand the current workforce development offer and to identify any gaps in provision.
- Ensure that Salford's workforce and families have an increased awareness and understanding of Exploitation
- Ensure that the multi-agency training offer is robust and accessible across the partnerships.
- Provide children, young people and adults with information that helps them to understand what is exploitation in an age appropriate way and in turn helps them to understand what is happening is wrong.
- Help members of the community to understand what to do if they are worried about exploitation and consider an engagement programme to work with local communities to help understand the barriers to reporting concerns.
- We will ensure that there is a repository of resources available to professionals across the partnership.
- We will ensure that local practice guidance and policies are updated at regular intervals and shared across the partnerships.
- Work with the National Probation Service to understand the motivations and contextual issues facing perpetrators and the impact of offender management programmes.
- Undertake a needs analysis of the adult provision in Salford.
- Build working relationships with Salvation Army to enhance the local offer in Salford.

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## Impact measures

- We will monitor the number of professionals accessing training across the partnerships and consideration as to how this has directly impacted on their practice (through evaluation).
- Undertake a practitioner survey to understand the workforce confidence in responding to needs of children, young people and adults and repeat this annually to measure progress and impact.
- Review data in relation to number of children, young people and adults accessing support services at an early intervention level.



# Priority two

## Protecting Young People and Adults from Exploitation

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**“We want to work together to protect young people and adults from the risk of exploitation. The SSCP and SSAB will strive to ensure that all professionals have the skills and information that they need to recognise and respond appropriately to all forms of exploitation. We will refresh ‘Problem Profiles’ to ensure the identification of individuals or groups at risk, locations and patterns to enable partners to target professional responses to reduce youth violence, online grooming and abuse. We will ensure responses to children missing from home, care and education are robust. This will link to our ‘adolescent offer’”**

As previously mentioned, the complex nature of Exploitation means tackling it is beyond the capacity and capability of any one agency. Multi agency working and information sharing at strategic and operational levels are key to all parts of our response. All partners will come together and work towards a common vision of protecting and safeguarding children, young people, and adults, and supporting all victims and survivors.

We will proactively work together to horizon scan for emerging risks and threats to make sure that we are in a position to respond appropriately.

We will seek to understand the effectiveness of our safeguarding practice to ensure that information sharing is robust when exploitation risk is identified and use this intelligence to strengthen our partnership approach.

We will learn from case review activity and feedback from people with lived experience (voice of the child, young person/adult) to seek to embed best practice approaches to support victims and survivors of exploitation to rebuild their lives by improving the support that is available. We will highlight effective practice and share learning.

## Actions to be taken

- Ensure that there is good quality support available for those affected by exploitation and their families.
- Develop a directory of services for those affected by exploitation and all key professionals working with children and young people.
- Review and update Local Pathway guidance for children, young people and adults and publish on the partnership websites.
- Explore opportunities for practitioners, children, young people and adults with lived experience to co-design/produce service pathways for those at risk of exploitation.
- Review the current support offer available to people who have experienced exploitation across Salford to ensure that this is robust and fit for purpose.
- Regular Multi agency audit of exploitation cases to gain insight into practice approaches.
- Undertake True to Us exercises in response to national learning and local reviews.
- We will monitor data in relation to exploitation to understand the level of need in Salford and use this to guide our practice approaches and response.
- We will triangulate data with our regional neighbours across Greater Manchester and horizon scan for emerging risks or threats.
- We will refresh “problem profiles” at regular intervals.
- We will strengthen governance and accountability by reviewing the Terms of Reference for the sub group and information sharing agreements.
- We will align strategic and operational work plans as part of Salford’s all age approach to tackling exploitation.
- The Exploitation sub group will oversee partnership activity in relation to priority exploitation areas to include Modern Slavery and its sub categories of Sexual Exploitation and Criminal Exploitation.

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## Impact measures

- People with lived experience will have access to appropriate support services that meet their needs and they will tell us that they feel supported.
- The SSCP/ SSAB will be assured that the multi-agency response to Exploitation is robust and effective through analysis of qualitative audit activity and True to Us exercises.
- Self-Assessments/S11 audit returns and practitioner survey (both children and adult services) findings will give assurance of the partnership response to Exploitation.

# Priority three

## Communications and Engagement

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**“We want to improve the information provided to parents, carers and the wider public about Exploitation, so that everyone is empowered with the advice and tools they need to identify risk and keep themselves and other safe.”**

To deliver on our objectives, the exploitation sub group will have a dedicated proactive communications approach that focuses on priority audiences; building on existing Government campaigns to share and reinforce key messages.

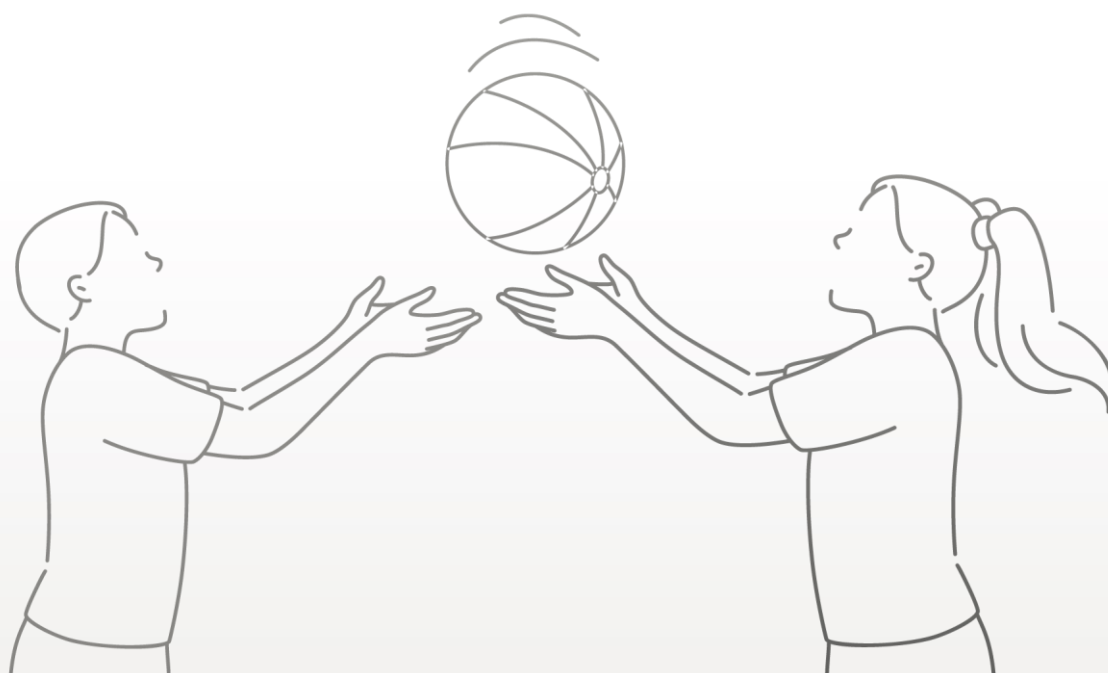


## Actions to be taken

- Exploitation subgroup to link with the Joint Communications Sub Group to target messages using existing communications channels to ensure maximum reach and impact.
- Continue to improve engagement with all partners and sections of the community. In partnership with local community and faith groups, design and launch a communications campaign for individuals, families, and communities about the signs of exploitation and how to report a concern.
- The Exploitation subgroup will ensure that all communications are aligned with the CSP/SSCP/ SSAB communication standards and quality standards (avoiding jargon, ensuring accessibility, honest and respectful, user- friendly and offering documents in alternative formats).
- We will maintain a repository of learning that is accessible to partners on the SSCP/ SSAB websites.

## Impact measures

- The partnerships will observe an improvement in the work we do, adding to professional skills and experience; and helping colleagues to improve (captured through existing Quality Assurance mechanisms, reviewing website analytics, stakeholder interviews and feedback channels).



# Priority four

## Listening and responding to the voice of young people and adults

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**“We want to listen to and engage with young people and adults to ensure that we understand what matters to them. We want to use this information to inform our services and we want to feed back to give them some assurance”.**

Salford seek to drive an evidence based response. We recognise the importance of on-going engagement with those impacted by exploitation, and we will seek to engage with them as this strategy is implemented. We want to listen and respond to lived experience.

We want this priority to consider the various methods in which we capture feedback and the lived experiences from victims and survivors. We want these approaches to be trauma-informed to try and prevent young people and adults having to repeat their stories. We want the partnership to be culturally aware and to hold each other to account to make sure that feedback and ideas from young people and adults are taken forward to improve how we deliver services in Salford.



## Actions to be taken

- Regular consultation with key stakeholders (including children, young people and adults affected by exploitation) to understand what matters to them and to capture lived experience.
- The Exploitation subgroup will consider findings from existing feedback channels via SSAB multi agency audits, the SSCP Listening Hub and Voice of the Child sub group and use this intelligence to inform the work plan.
- Use listening loops to feed-back to young people and adults in a "You said, We did" format
- Ensure that we have a workforce who is trained to listen (part of the Listening Hub work plan).
- Develop cultural competency of professionals to support cross cultural conversations (part of the Workforce Development group work plan).
- Ensure the CSP, SSCP and SSAB enable children, young people and adults voice to be heard by being able to share their lived experiences which can then feed into the subgroup to influence positive change.

## Impact measures

- Young people and adults will tell us that they feel listened to and be able to contribute to the work of the partnership.
- Services will adapt and develop based on feedback from those with a lived experience.





# Priority five

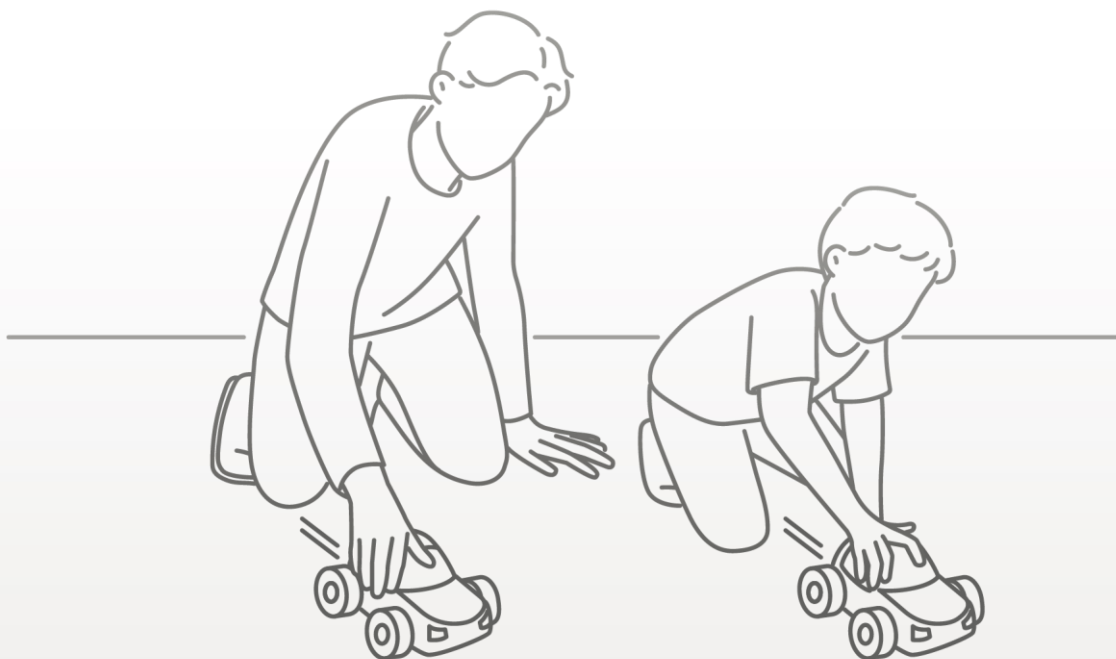
## Safeguarding Effectiveness

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**“We will hold ourselves to account to learn from data and insight gathered across the system, quality assure safeguarding practice and monitor performance across the partnership to improve outcomes for young people and adults in Salford.”**

The Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and the Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) are committed to quality assuring safeguarding practice and monitoring performance across the system. We will monitor the effectiveness of local, inter-agency safeguarding arrangements and identify and report on good practice and areas for improvement in an open and transparent manner.

The Exploitation subgroup will consider evidence from local reviews and national inspection reports and inquiries and advise the CSP, SSCP and SSAB on any action required to improve safeguarding standards in Salford.



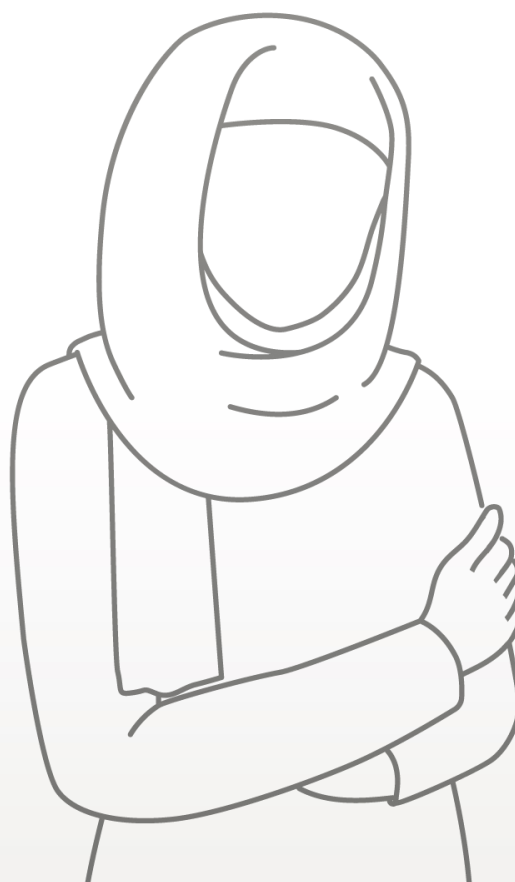
## Actions to be taken

The Exploitation subgroup will embed the comprehensive set of processes which enable the partnership to be assured about the effectiveness of safeguarding in multiple ways including but not limited to:

- True to Us exercises in response to national and local case reviews.
- Single agency audit
- Multi agency audit
- Section 11/self-assessments
- Practitioner Forums
- Performance data reporting.
- Spotlight Reports being presented to the CSP, SSCP and SSAB as a form of assurance on the current offer.
- We will develop an integrated approach to identifying and responding to emerging areas of safeguarding practice across Salford.
- Expand the sources of data collection as part of the quarterly Children's, Adults and Community Safety Intelligence dashboard.
- Capture the experience of practitioners working cases to identify best practice and understand the challenges that they face.

## Impact measures

- Identification of more abuse and evidence that we have safeguarded more people through Police recorded crime, Children's Social Care data and independent inspectorate reports.
- Feedback channels from practitioners will indicate an improvement in overcoming challenges identified.



# Next Steps

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The CSP, SSCP and SSAB will continue to seek assurance on the implementation of the Salford Exploitation Strategy ensuring that it delivers on the key objectives.

The Exploitation subgroup will be responsible for implementing the strategy within the work plan. The work plan will detail the steps to be taken and detail SMART deliverable actions and evidence of impact.

The activity of the Exploitation subgroup will be triangulated with the other partnerships and subgroups in Salford to ensure a robust response and to reduce duplication.

