

CRE process – April 2022

Introduction

This process focuses on supporting, safeguarding and protecting children at risk of exploitation (CRE); and outlines the actions to be taken if a child is identified as being at risk of being exploited or has already been exploited. **Any child who is at risk of or suffering any form of exploitation should be treated as a victim of abuse, regardless of the circumstances of the case. This includes; Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal exploitation (CCE).**

Children who go missing from home or care are at particular risk of exploitation, and the link between children being exploited and going missing from education, home or care is strong and should be explored. The [Risk Assessment Risk assessment](#), inclusive of the completed narrative, should always be completed when children go missing; alongside the return interview process. Children in Care, children with a learning and/or physical disability, Special Education Needs and behaviour or conduct disorders are particularly vulnerable, as are children in transition from Children's to Adult services and independent living.

Parents are key in ensuring that their children are protected from CRE as they will hold relevant and pertinent information which provides a line of sight into their child's world. Parents are worried about their children and, in most cases, welcome the support and intervention by the local authority and external agencies. These children are Children In Need.

The earlier the intervention, the better the chances of success and it is likely to be far more effective

The **Child at Risk of Exploitation (CRE)** [Risk Assessment Risk assessment](#) should be used by all practitioners when there are concerns that a child is experiencing or is at risk of being exploited to help identify the level, nature and extent of these concerns. The practitioner identifying the concerns should work together with other involved agencies to ensure that there is a joined up approach in response. **The CRE Risk Assessment is not a tool for use directly with children or families as it is a professional analysis tool, to be used together by all partners.** On completion of the CRE Risk Assessment, practitioners should consider the level of risk identified; low, medium or high and if there are any other needs or concerns including information in any current assessments. Practitioners must keep a record of all case discussions, decision making and interventions. Practitioners should also complete **the Operation Liberty** Form if they have identified individuals or places that pose a risk to children. These forms are located in the CRE Risk Assessment Risk and should be forwarded to the Police Referral Unit and shared with involved practitioners (as detailed within the firm).

Regular updates of the risk assessment are required, minimum every 4 - 6 weeks in TAF meetings, Network and Core Groups. In addition, a new risk assessment should be completed after any significant which would also require an update of the single assessment and potentially s17 or s47 strategy

meeting. Note that the level of risk recorded at the meeting **will remain on file/case status** regardless of new assessments, until there is **a further multi-agency CRE review meeting to formally agree the risk level** with all relevant partners.

Please note that throughout this procedure, the use of ‘Social Work Teams’ pertains to:

- Youth Justice and Offending Teams
- Integrated Disabled Children’s Service
- Children in Care Teams
- Children’s Social Care Services (Locality Teams)

	Low risk	Medium risk	High risk	LAC
Who will manage CRE?	<p>Early Help</p> <p>No cases with low risk CRE as the only need will be held by CSC staff</p>	<p>Social work teams/Early Help</p> <p>Children who are at medium risk of CRE will be considered as CiN and for many it will be appropriate for these to be held by social care with a team manager reviewing; however cases can be managed by early help with the following safeguards in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion between the EH/CSC team managers • A current SA • CRE risk assessment undertaken with 2 weeks • These children will be categorised as Complex CiN and be reviewed by a CiNRO 	<p>Social work teams (CPM involvement)</p> <p>Co-working with MAT worker may be possible</p>	<p>If the child is Looked After by the Local Authority, the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) must also be informed of any emerging concerns by the social worker, within 48hours of identification.</p> <p>CRE meetings will be additional to Looked After Reviews. The Team Manager/Child Protection Manager will consult with the IRO and the worker to determine the best approach.</p>

<p>Assessment</p>	<p>In most cases if the level of risk is identified as low, the child is likely to require support via an Early Help Assessment (EHA) alongside regular reviews of the CRE Risk Assessment, at a minimum of 6 weekly.</p> <p>When there is low level of risk, the threshold for Police or Social Care involvement is unlikely to be met. Request agencies update report</p>	<p>For a new case, the referral will come from IRT and a single assessment must be completed, and case be referred to VCM.</p> <p>For cases already held by MAT, where the CRE risk assessment outcome is Medium, the case should be stepped up via VCM for completion of a single assessment, and agreement as to how best to manage the case</p> <p>For cases open to CSC, the risk assessment outcome is medium, and there is suggestion that the case can be managed by MAT, a single assessment is to be completed and case be referred to VCM.</p> <p>In all cases, a Social Care Single Assessment must be completed, alongside regular reviews of the CRE Risk Assessment, at a minimum of 6 weekly.</p>	<p>Where a young person is considered to be at HIGH risk of CRE, it is likely that that there are concerns that a child is suffering or likely to suffer Significant Harm and therefore Children's Social Care will hold a S47 Strategy Discussion; this may include a Complex Strategy meeting and medical investigation where appropriate. This strategy meeting should be held within 48working hours of the risk being identified as high.</p> <p>The manager will then hold a threshold discussion with CPM, within 24 working hours of the S47, and confirm the need for a CRE meeting or ICPC to be chaired by CPM.</p> <p>Where the Section 47 enquiry indicates there are a number of other concerns alongside the exploitation, in particular neglectful or collusive parenting or where the CRE risks are very high, a Child Protection Conference should be requested by the Social</p>	<p>The IRO should be invited to any separate CRE meeting and minutes shared with them. There will be a separate CRE plan but this will be referenced in the child's Looked After Care Plan.</p> <p>Medium risk: CRE meeting to be chaired by CiC/Locality manager, following update of single assessment</p> <p>High risk: Threshold discussion with the Team Manager and a CPM. Where threshold met, CPM to chair CRE reviews. The IRO should be informed of the outcome of this meeting.</p> <p>Note, that where children are placed out of area, and are identified as being at risk</p>
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<p>Plan</p>	<p>The plan developed should address any concerns associated with CRE, taking into consideration issues identified in the CRE Risk Assessment Risk assessment. The plan should be outcome focused and SMART, determining the appropriate interventions or referrals to specialist agencies offered.</p>			

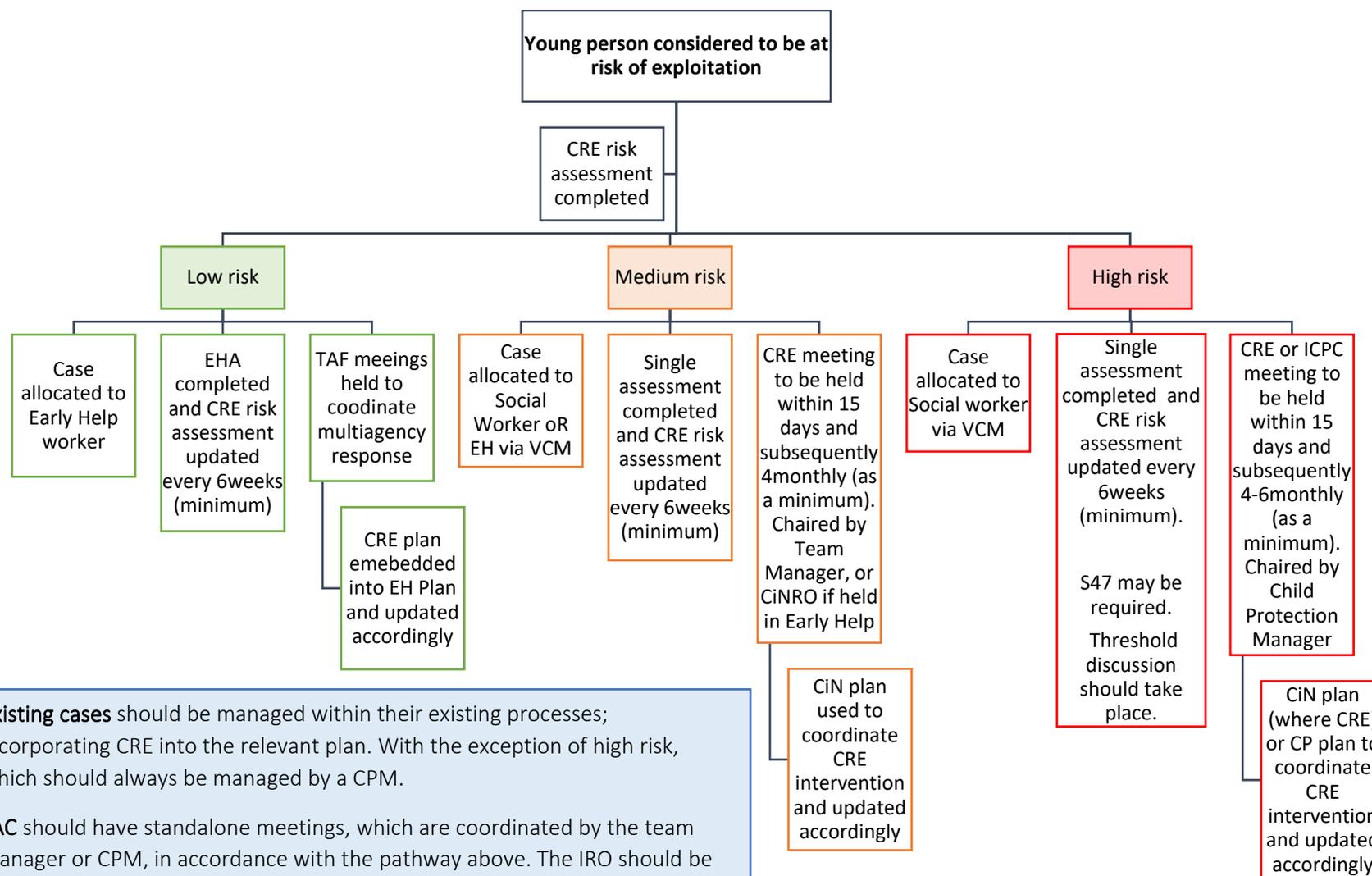
	<p>Incorporate in TAF Plan and follow Early Help Guidance .</p>	<p>CiN plan – recorded within the CiN pathway, irrespective of whether the case is managed by Early Help or CSC.</p>	<p>CiN plan where risks solely pertain to CRE - recorded within the CiN pathway.</p> <p>CP plan (recorded within the CP pathway)</p>	
<p>CRE Review</p>	<p>The purpose of the CRE meeting is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on issues relating to exploitation; • Explore with the parent / carer how we can together safeguard their child and support them in doing so • Consider the risk and vulnerability factors as well as protective factors to judge the level and detail of the risk to the child; • Plan the detail of the interventions, including direct work with the child and their family, using the Risk Assessment Risk assessment guidance; • Plan disruption strategies that can be employed see Disruption Strategies within the CRE Risk Assessment Risk assessment; • Consider the feasibility and progression of prosecution against the offender; and <p>Specific actions arising from CRE meeting must be recorded and an outline plan made available at the end of the meeting, and the confirmed minutes circulated as soon as possible, and always within 20working days of the meeting.</p> <p>At the end of every review (CiN/CP/LAC); the CRE questions should be completed on the outcomes form, and the case status updated accordingly.</p>			
	<p>In most cases the EHA should be undertaken by the identifying agency and, where needed, they should call a Team Around the</p>	<p>The Team Manager will convene a CiN (CRE) meeting within 15 working days of identifying Medium Risk of CRE.</p>	<p>Reviews will be chaired by a CPM and the initial held within 15days of the threshold discussion.</p>	

	<p>Family (TAF) meeting involving the parents / carers, the child and other agencies.</p> <p>TAF meetings should be held at intervals of no more than 12 weeks, and be chaired by the Lead Worker.</p>	<p>In preparation for the INITIAL review; the lead practitioner will complete an:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An updated CRE Risk assessment • The Single Assessment • A proposed CRE plan <p>This should be submitted three working days before the review meeting.</p> <p>For subsequent reviews, the following should be provided, 3 days before the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An updated CRE risk assessment • Review report • Updated chronology and genogram <p>The most recent plan Reviews will include all involved, including relevant agencies, and the child and their parents / carers will be supported to attend. Cases should be subsequently reviewed at intervals of a minimum of 4monthly.</p>	<p>In preparation for the INITIAL review; the lead practitioner will complete an:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An updated CRE Risk assessment • ICPC report (where CP) with the agencies involved • The Single Assessment (where CiN) • A proposed CRE plan <p>This should be submitted three working days before the review meeting.</p> <p>For subsequent reviews, the following should be provided, 3 days before the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An updated CRE risk assessment • Review report, where CiN • RCPC report, where CP • Updated chronology and genogram • The most recent plan <p>Reviews will include all involved, including relevant agencies, and</p>	
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Multiagency meetings	<p>Meetings between TAF meetings are not always required. However, where appropriate and necessary, Professional Meetings including Missing Strategies should be held, and clearly consider the CRE risks.</p>	<p>Network Meetings should take place 6 weekly with the date for the next set at each one.</p>	<p>Network/Core group meetings should take place 6 weekly with the date for the next set at each one.</p>	
Other agency involvement	<p>Safe and Sound Neighbourhood safeguarding teams</p>	<p>Referral directly to Catch 22 – <i>needs to be authorised by a CPM</i></p> <p>Referral to Safe and Sound for parenting work</p> <p>Referral to Barnardo’s NRM referrals as necessary</p> <p>Involvements of Neighbourhood safeguarding teams, and any other relevant additional agencies.</p>	<p>Referral directly to Catch 22 – <i>needs to be authorised by a CPM</i></p> <p>Referral to Safe and Sound for parenting work</p> <p>Referral to Barnardo’s NRM referrals as necessary</p> <p>Involvements of Neighbourhood safeguarding teams</p> <p>Child Exploitation Team, and any other relevant additional agencies.</p>	

	<p>No child 12 years or under and/or a child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) issues can be immediately assessed as Low Risk if concerns indicate they are being abused or at risk of CRE. As a minimum, the child should be recorded as Medium Risk, though after thorough assessment if protective factors suggest they are low risk then this can be agreed with between the relevant Early Help and CSC Team Managers; and can be managed by Early Help. This rationale needs to be clearly recorded within the casefile.</p> <p>Where a case escalates to medium risk: it should be escalated to VCM and a SA should be completed; if outcome is medium there should be a discussion with CSC Team Manager and MAT Manager to agree co-working, handover and plan (see above).</p>		
<p>Additional information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> PLEASE NOTE: this process is for cases where CRE is the only need of the young person. Where cases are already open to CSC: A pre-existing CP case should have CRE needs considered within their existing plan, reviewed by CPM, irrespective of level of risk A pre-existing CiN case should have Low or Medium CRE needs considered within their existing CiN plan, reviewed by CiNRO or Team Manager Where cases fluctuate between risk levels, in a repeated pattern e.g. high, medium, high across a 6months period - a clearly recorded threshold discussion should take place, with a potential need to review the single assessment in order to determine the most appropriate pathway for the young person Where a young person is S17 at 16/17 years of age living away from home –The CiNRO should be informed of any emerging or escalating concerns, within 48hours and the outcome of any threshold discussions. At medium risk, the CiNRO will ensure that CRE is captured within the CiN plan and that there are clear actions around mitigating risk and reducing the risk of exploitation. At High risk, the young person should follow the relevant pathway and a discussion between the CPM and CiNRO should take place to reduce duplication of reviews. 			

Note that where a young person is living independently, away from home, DCC has a duty to assess and determine if the Young Person (YP) is a Child in Need (S17) or LAC (s20). Paramount to the decision will be the young person's views. Section 20(3) states that every local authority shall provide accommodation for any young person within their area who has reached the age of sixteen and whose welfare the authority consider is likely to be seriously prejudiced if they do not provide them with accommodation.



Existing cases should be managed within their existing processes; incorporating CRE into the relevant plan. With the exception of high risk, which should always be managed by a CPM.

LAC should have standalone meetings, which are coordinated by the team manager or CPM, in accordance with the pathway above. The IRO should be fully informed. Recording will be completed on standalone forms, specific to CLA.

High reduced to medium - where a case was previously managed by a CPM, at high risk (whether CiN or CP), the initial review at medium risk should then be completed by a CiNRO. as per the complex CiN procedure.