

Staff CPD Resource – *Child Criminal Exploitation*

This resource has been developed to support DSLs with supporting staff with their understanding of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). This resource should be used and facilitated by a DSL to ensure that any queries and comments from staff can be responded to appropriately. More information about CCE can be found in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (Annex B) and at cce.lgfl.net.



Tips for delivering:

- Please read through the materials first before delivering this to staff.
- **Do not tell the staff that the scenario is about CCE as you want them to identify this!**
- Offer a health warning before you start about the content.
- Read each section of the case study aloud in order and pause to ask the questions as per the order below.
- At the end, please reconfirm your policy and reporting procedure to staff.
- Remind staff of how to seek support should they require this.
- Don't forget to evidence completion of this exercise as a staff update/CPD.

Jude is currently a high-performing and visible student in Year 10. Teachers view him as an asset to the school community. An individual who works hard, is creative and well liked.

Jude is achieving well, predicted 7+ strong GCSEs. He is exceptionally confident and a natural leader. He started his own music group, "The Chosen Ones," which is well-known in the school, and Jude is the driving force behind its organisation and is a good lyricist. Like many young people, he has a keen interest in maintaining his high status among his peers.

Outside of school, Jude lives with his parents and 2 siblings who also attend the school. Jude is occasionally vocal about money, mentioning how hard his mum works and expressing a strong, almost adult-like desire to 'provide' for his family.

1. Are there any vulnerabilities you have identified associated with this child?

Over a period of several weeks, staff become aware of him interacting with a couple of older young people who are not pupils at your school. When Jude is asked who the boys are, he says they are neighbours and one of them is his cousin. Jude seems to approach these interactions with his typical confident, outgoing manner. They seem to praise and affirm him visibly when they talk. These boys aren't seen again.

Jude has a few episodes of arriving late to school which have increased recently. When challenged, he provides vague excuses. He also has a few instances of unauthorised absence—missing an afternoon session, often claiming a sudden illness.

Jude's attention in class can be a little inconsistent. He misses a couple of deadlines for homework, although this is not unheard of. But the quality of his work does seem to have dropped and Jude's attitude towards this, seems to have shifted from ambitious to laid back.

"The Chosen Ones" continues to be a well-known group in school. Although their focus appears to be shifting to less about music and more about content creation online. You are aware of a few fractures within this group, with a couple no longer being part of it.

Jude has been reprimanded several times for using his phone during the school day, contrary to school policy, and his latest reaction to this was being very rude to staff. When staff tried to confiscate the phone, Jude swore at the teacher and left school. You phone Jude's mum to explain your concerns. Jude's mum is very understanding and shares that she too has been concerned by Jude's excessive phone use. She will talk to Jude.

- 2. What are some of the early warning signs of a safeguarding concern in this case study?**
- 3. What would you do now if you were the child's teacher?**
- 4. How might the child's perspective of their new 'friendship' differ from an adult's view?**
- 5. What information is crucial to document at this stage. How and where would you record it?**

Jude is suspended after the phone incident. You try and arrange to meet with mum and Jude, but mum is unable to due to work commitments.

Jude's attendance continues to decline, and his sister was overheard by a teacher saying that she was worried about Jude 'going O.T and finding food in his room'. When approached for more information she refuses to talk any more.

Jude's emotional regulation has also declined. On one occasion, a fight breaks out at lunchtime within "The Chosen Ones", and Jude is heard using unfamiliar and aggressive language towards his peers - a significant departure from his usually confident temperament.

You phone Jude's mum and she tells you that things have been difficult and she is not sure what to do. She says that Jude goes out all weekend as well as most evenings, often returning late into the night, and she rarely sees him.

- 6. What type of harm do you think Jude is experiencing?**
- 7. Can you name three different ways that a child could be criminally exploited?**
- 8. What else can we do as a school to prevent children from being exploited?**
- 9. Are there any children in our school where we have any similar concerns to those highlighted in this case study?**

Now read this firsthand account from Jude:

Growing up, I was always hungry to get ahead. I had plans, ideas, and a drive that most adults would've been proud of. In school, I was a natural leader. I even formed a group called Chosen Ones. On the surface, it looked positive and we made music, built a small following, and even created an album. At the same time, some of what funded those dreams came from the wrong places. I lived two lives: one where I grafted hard, stayed creative, and pushed myself academically, and another where I felt I had to keep my name, status, and ego intact.

Music was the main thing that kept me focused, and the chance to go to college to study music technology felt like a way out.

But outside school, I didn't have many positive male role models. The men closest to me were either absent, distracted, or emotionally unavailable. So even though I had ambition, I lacked direction. Whenever I wanted to earn money or try something productive, my parents encouraged me, but it always came with waiting. "Your birthday's coming," or "Christmas is around the corner." They meant well, but to me it felt like I had no options. At that age I didn't understand patience, long-term thinking, or the idea that the right opportunity sometimes takes time.

All I felt was pressure, school pressure, peer pressure, financial pressure, wanting to grow up too fast, wanting to impress, wanting to feel seen. In that gap between my ambition and lack of guidance, I made choices that were far bigger than my age. I started looking outside the home for direction, older boys, street-smart men, people who talked fast money and independence. Without realising it, I stepped into a world that had nothing to do with real success.

At the time, I didn't have the language to describe what was happening to me. I thought grooming looked like the dramatic stuff on TV, threats, force, clear danger. My experience didn't look like that. It was friendly. Flattering. It felt like older people believed in me.

In school, teachers saw I was confident and creative, and older boys outside school saw the same thing. They'd praise me. Call me smart. Tell me I had potential. And because I didn't have many positive male voices at home, those words stuck. It felt like someone finally understood me. Little by little, I was being shaped. Not by threats, but by validation. It started with "small favours", then errands, then longer journeys. Before I even realised it, I'd become a front-line worker, moving heavy drugs across the country and I loved it. They sold it to me as responsibility, independence, and opportunity. It felt like control. It felt like I was choosing it.

But the truth was, they made the decisions, they set the routes, they dictated the risks. I carried all the consequences. Why didn't they take the job themselves? Because exploitation always finds someone younger who wants to impress. Looking back now, I can see how young and vulnerable I really was. At the time, I believed I was in charge. I wasn't. I was being led deeper and deeper into exploitation disguised as opportunity.

The first time I was sent to a stranger's home, nothing felt right. The place was filthy with needles on the floor, hazards everywhere, doors hanging off their hinges. People drifted in and out, angry, intoxicated, unpredictable. There was constant Class A drug use, arguments, tension.

I was still a schoolboy, balancing homework, music, and this double life. I'd act confident in front of friends, but deep down I was scared. Sometimes I had to sleep there. I'd lie awake listening for footsteps on the landing, unsure if someone was coming to fight, argue, steal, or worse. I'd be left alone to "hold things down", responsible for adults who left me in a situation far beyond my emotional capacity. I didn't eat properly, wash properly, or sleep properly. Every moment was unpredictable.

Because I was praised for being "reliable", I convinced myself I was doing well. I thought the fear meant I was brave. I thought the risk meant I was respected. I was a child placed in an environment no child should ever be in. I wasn't in control, I was controlled. I wasn't being respected, I was being used.

10. Does this account from Jude himself evoke any further reflections of how we can prevent CCE at school?

For more information on CCE or other types of harm that can be caused to children, please visit cce.lgfl.net. We also deliver training on this topic which can be booked at safetraining.lgfl.net.