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Welcome to our April 2024 Newsletter

In this newsletter we bring together information which we hope you will find useful and we highlight how the Partnership continues to communicate and keep in touch with all our agencies and provide guidance to support you in your role working with children and adults. In this edition, we bring you information in the about gathering information and evidence for different agencies in order to improve services and guidance. There is also information about Modern Slavery and Partnership work, important safeguarding updates and new training dates.

Please check your Me Learning account for upcoming training sessions and e-learning sessions for both adult and child safeguarding. Places available on many sessions for April and May.

<https://app.melearning.co.uk/auth/login>



In the Spotlight.....

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

‘Modern slavery’ is an umbrella term that encompasses the crimes of human trafficking and slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour.

- Victims of modern slavery can be men, women and children of any age across the world
- There is an assumption that most victims of modern slavery are trafficked to the UK from other countries, but residents of the UK are also among the victims that are exploited in the UK and other countries
- The crime is often hidden from the authorities and the general public
- Victims may struggle to leave their situation because of threats, punishment, violence, coercion and deception, and some may believe that they are not in a situation of exploitation.

Home Office Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance

Home Office [Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance for England and Wales](#) is aimed at competent authority staff in any part of the UK who make decisions on whether or not an individual is a potential victim/victim of modern slavery for the purpose of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) – wherever in the UK a potential victim is identified.

Updates to Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance – February 2024

The guidance was updated on 22nd February. A main change is in relation to reconsideration requests (Annex E -page 168), which relates to reasonable grounds decision or Conclusive Grounds decision. Where the relevant competent authority issues a positive Reasonable Grounds decision, the individual will be considered a potential victim of modern slavery from this point until the point at which the relevant competent authority issues a Conclusive Grounds decision, or the individual otherwise leaves the NRM. The new guidance states that individuals will only be allowed one reconsideration request of either a Reasonable Grounds decision or Conclusive Grounds decision and the request must be made within one calendar month of the decision. An individual, or someone acting on their behalf, may request reconsideration of a negative Reasonable Grounds or Conclusive Grounds decision by the relevant competent authority. A reconsideration request must be made within one month of the negative Reasonable Grounds or Conclusive Grounds decision on the following grounds: Where additional evidence can be provided which, taken with all the available evidence already considered, could demonstrate that the individual is a victim of modern slavery. There are specific concerns that a decision made is not in line with this guidance.

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

The Home Office has published the NRM and duty to notify statistics summary for 2023. The statistics provide a summary and breakdown of the number of potential victims of modern slavery referred into the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) or via the Duty to Notify (DtN) process in 2023.

Key findings are:

- 17,004 potential victims of modern slavery were referred to the Home Office in 2023, (16,921 in previous year), the highest annual number since the NRM began in 2009
- around four-fifths of referrals (81%; 13,704) were sent to the Single Competent Authority (SCA) and the rest (19%; 3,300) to the Immigration Enforcement Competent Authority (IECA) for consideration
- the number of referrals for females (24%; 4,088) were at their highest on record, whereas the number of referrals for males (76%; 12,903) saw a fall from the previous year
- the number of referrals for child potential victims (44%; 7,432) were at their highest on record, whereas the number for adult potential victims (51%; 8,622) saw a decrease from the previous year
- the most common nationality referred this year was UK (25%; 4,299), whose numbers were at their highest for any year since the NRM began; the second most commonly referred nationality was Albanian (24%; 4,052) and third was Vietnamese (6%; 991)



Action for Children has published a review of child criminal exploitation across the UK. The review explores the scale and nature of the criminal exploitation of children and includes insight from the lived experiences of children, parents and professionals. Key learning highlights: the need for a clear and consistent definition of the criminal exploitation of children; tensions between the criminal justice system and child protection, with the criminalisation of exploited children ; and difficulties in identifying, preventing and responding to exploitation. **Further information:** [Shattered lives, stolen futures: the Jay](#)

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Healthwatch England are running the campaign, with support from a number of partners including VoiceAbility and Disability Rights UK. The campaign will focus on collecting experiences from certain communities, such as:

- Minority ethnic communities
- Lower-income communities
- Autistic people
- People with learning disabilities
- Disabled people with physical or sensory impairments

How CQC Will use The Feedback

CQC intends to draw from the feedback they gather to improve care services for everyone. They stress that both good and bad feedback is valuable. Anything you can share will help CQC keep track of standards across all services. Respondents can stay anonymous. However, CQC are encouraging participants to share their contact details to help with ongoing discussions.

Give your feedback [now](#)





Department for Education

Safeguarding is one of the most important responsibilities that schools and colleges have, and we know how seriously teachers, designated safeguarding leads, support staff, and school and college leadership take that responsibility. Safeguarding is never static. As new safeguarding threats emerge, we all need to consider how we can best respond to those threats and what solutions can be put in place to address them. We are launching this 12-week call for evidence now, to take the views of schools, colleges, and other professionals on safeguarding practice development and direction, in advance of Keeping children safe in education 2025 (KCSIE). Your reflections, experience, and suggestions in this call for evidence will help us to inform future iterations of KCSIE and shape our long-term policies to support staff to keep children safe in education. For this reason – whilst we will not be publishing the results of this call for evidence, we will consult on any substantive changes we make to future iterations of KCSIE, and school and college safeguarding policy, following this exercise, in the normal way. Take the survey [here](#)



Disclosure & Barring Service

The Disclosure and Barring Service is hosting its Spring Conference: [DBS Spring Conference 2024 | LinkedIn on Tuesday 30 April](#) – a free virtual event open to everyone with an interest in safeguarding. At our Spring Conference 2024, we will be sharing a range of webinars tailored to support individuals and organisations across a variety of sectors. Each webinar will be hosted by specialists in the areas they will discuss. Following each webinar there will be an opportunity (for everyone) to participate in a live Q & A session with DBS experts. You will be able to join all six webinars throughout the day, or choose any specific ones you are most interested in. Please note, if you are unable to join us on the day the sessions will be available after the conference via this page on LinkedIn and on a separate landing page for the benefit of non-LinkedIn users. Please also forward this on to any of your safeguarding peers who would be interested in attending. If you have any queries, please email the team at DBSEngagement@dbs.gov.uk

OUR PLEDGE

To be confident in having open and honest conversations with each other as multi-agency partners in order to do the very best we can for children, adults and their families in Darlington.

Multi-agency working is vital to maintain a focus on children and vulnerable adults while also keeping them at the heart of all decisions.

Our Pledge is an opportunity to:

- Seek out professional conversations with each other at the earliest opportunity
- Have a shared understanding of the strengths and risks within a family
- Actively listen to each other and share important information
- Respect each other's expertise
- Be open and empathetic to the professional views of others
- Be professionally curious and evidence what we say
- Use common language that everyone understands



Concerned about a child?

Contact the Children's Initial
Advice Team
Professionals on **01325 406252**
Public on **01325 406222**

Concerned about an adult?

Contact the Adult
Contact Team
on **01325 406111**



Statutory Safeguarding Partners

Ann Baxter, Independent Chair/Scrutineer

James Stroyan, Group Director of People

Dave Ashton, Detective Chief Superintendent

Chris Piercy, Director of Nursing and Quality