



Office of the Police and Crime

Commissioner

PO Box 688

PE29 9LA

Tel: 0300 333 3456

Email: Cambs-pcc@cambs.police.uk

Twitter: [@PCCCambs](https://twitter.com/PCCCambs)

Rt Hon Suella Braverman KC MP
Home Secretary
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

25th May 2023

Dear Home Secretary

HMICFRS Report: An inspection of how well the police and National Crime Agency tackle the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

Under Section 55(5) of the Police Act 1996, as Police and Crime Commissioner I am pleased to provide my formal response to the report by HMICFRS entitled 'An inspection of how well the police and National Crime Agency tackle the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children.'

Both the Chief Constable and I welcome the publication of this report. The Chief Constable's response to the recommendations is shown at Appendix 1.

I note that there are two recommendations directed specifically at Police and Crime Commissioners which I would like to respond to.

Recommendation 9 - By 31 October 2023, chief constables and police and crime commissioners should make sure their commissioned services for children, and the

process for referring them for support or therapeutic services, are available for children affected by online sexual abuse and exploitation.

Response: In Cambridgeshire I commission a county-wide support service for all young victims and witnesses of crime. Children and young people who have been affected by online sexual abuse and exploitation can be referred, or self-refer, into this service. A team of Cambridgeshire-based staff offer emotional and practical support in a way which meets the needs of the young person. This can also include therapeutic support from an experienced counsellor. Children and young people can also access support from Child and Young People Independent Sexual Violence Advocates based in our county-wide support service for victims and survivors of rape and sexual abuse. The ChiSVAs who are employed by the Cambridge and Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership have significant experience supporting young people who have experienced such crimes. Both services take a trauma-informed approach and ensure the young person's needs take priority.

Recommendation 11

By 31 July 2023, chief constables and police and crime commissioners should review the advice they publish, and, if necessary, revise it, to make sure it is consistent with the National Crime Agency's [ThinkUKnow \(Child Exploitation and Online Protection\)](#) material.

Response: The approach taken by my office in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is to provide direct links to information published by the Constabulary to ensure consistency of messaging. My office will support the Constabulary to meet this recommendation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Darryl Preston', written in a cursive style.

Darryl Preston

Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Enc - Appendix 1 – Cambridgeshire Constabulary's response to HMICFRS report
'An inspection of how well the police and National Crime Agency tackle the online
sexual abuse and exploitation of children.'

Cambridgeshire Constabulary's response to HMICFRS report 'An inspection of how well the police and National Crime Agency tackle the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children.'

HMICFRS recommendations for police forces:

Recommendation 2

By 31 October 2023, **chief constables**, the director general of the National Crime Agency and chief officers with responsibilities for regional organised crime units should make sure they have effective data collection and performance management information. This is so they can understand the nature and scale of online child sexual abuse and exploitation in real time and its impact on resources, and so forces and the National Crime Agency can react quickly to provide adequate resources to meet demand.

Force response: Through a combination of our own Corporate Performance data capture within Power BI, Athena, and Cora as well as the constabulary's POLIT's own specific tracking functions and that of ERSOU / NCA quarterly assessments, we are able to closely monitor and evaluate progress and developing trends and patterns. This is supplemented at a more strategic level by periodic CSA/E problem profiles being created by our Corporate Performance analysts.

Recommendation 5

By 30 April 2025, chief constables should make sure officers and staff dealing with online child sexual abuse and exploitation have completed the right training to carry out their roles.

Force response: This is regularly monitored by the Senior Leadership Team that oversee our POLIT and is tracked through Investigations and Specialist Crime Department (ISCD) performance metrics and a quarterly deep dive that requires a clear evaluation of POLIT and connected areas against specific Key Performance Questions and Key Performance Indicators. The POLIT maintain a training matrix of

all officers and staff to ensure the team possesses a holistic suite of training and qualifications. Any new personnel joining the team receive appropriate induction training and upskilling and the whole team, in common with the whole ISCD department, is subject to an annual review under the Learning Needs Analysis exercise, which informs bids for funding from the collaborated Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire central training budget. In the past two years, significant training investment has been made.

Recommendation 8

By 31 July 2023, chief constables should satisfy themselves that they are correctly sharing information and making referrals to their statutory safeguarding partners in cases of online child sexual abuse and exploitation. This is to make sure they are fulfilling their statutory obligations, placing the protection of children at the centre of their approach, and agreeing joint plans to better protect children who are at risk.

Force response: We have a specific partnership facility, working closely with our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), that ensures the fast time sharing of relevant information with partners in accordance with agreed Information Sharing Agreements (ISA's) and Memorandum of Understandings (MOU's). The speed and effectiveness of this is continually being reviewed and scrutinised: the introduction in about 6 weeks' time of a Child Exploitation (CE) Hub bringing existing resources closer together will ensure better long-term coordination and tasking of all CE activity across the force and the partnership. The POLIT have recently made enquiries with Forces identified by HMICFRS as delivering 'best practice' as well as comparable, peer Forces who have undergone similar journeys. This information has been captured and assessments are being made as to whether these approaches can be used to benefit Cambridgeshire's approach/context.

Recommendation 9

By 31 October 2023, chief constables and police and crime commissioners should make sure their commissioned services for children, and the process for referring them for support or therapeutic services, are available for children affected by online sexual abuse and exploitation.

Force response: There is a referral mechanism in place for officers who come into contact through crime with children affected by online sexual abuse and exploitation using the PCC commissioned service ('Embrace') via the Cambs Victim and Witness Hub, who offer emotional and practical support to victims of crime. The referral mechanism is principally activated by an automated process through the police crime recording system but self-referrals are also accepted. Any victims where the crime is dealt with by the specialist child abuse team (CAISU) have access to the referral mechanisms above as well as more specialist support through referrals to the child Independent Sexual Violence Advocate service. CAISU are constantly reviewing the service that they provide child victims to enhance support still further. This will be further strengthened going forward by the introduction of a CE Hub that will have additional responsibility for identifying and tracking cohorts of at-risk children, offenders, and force wide and partnership wide safeguarding and enforcement activity: this will connect to and support the referral of children identified as victims of online abuse and exploitation.

Recommendation 11

By 31 July 2023, chief constables and police and crime commissioners should review the advice they publish, and, if necessary, revise it, to make sure it is consistent with the National Crime Agency's ThinkUKnow (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) material.

Force response: The content of our force website has been reviewed by both the Corporate Communications lead and the Senior Leadership Team for POLIT and Vulnerability and conclude the information we provide is consistent with that of the National Crime Agency's ThinkUKnow material, it has links to the ThinkUKnow site and provides advice and guidance in this area. We will continue to review this on an annual basis to ensure compliance and compatibility.

Recommendation 12

By 31 October 2023, chief constables in England should satisfy themselves that their forces' work with schools is consistent with the national curriculum and National Crime Agency educational products on online child sexual abuse and exploitation.

They should also make sure this work is targeted based on joint analysis with their safeguarding partners.

Force response: Our Children and Young People Team consistently use the resources and tools available on the CEOP website in relation to research when creating our educational packages for schools. Equally, we have made good reference to their resources when creating articles for our monthly newsletter. We have conducted a review of our provision to children and young people in schools and education establishments. Our Children and Young Persons Team have collaborated with partner agencies to produce a number of packages:

Safer School Newsletter: Monthly newsletter created for Parents and Carers of both Primary and Secondary schools and all care home facilities. This newsletter will also have at least one article per month in relation to CSE/CCE, for example:

- On-line Child Sexual Exploitation: Spot the signs.
- Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in sport –information about a campaign focussing on abuse and exploitation in the sport and leisure industry
- The World of Gaming: Parental Support – Resources to help parents/Carers navigate and de-mystify the world of gaming.
- Safer Internet Day – How to get involved and advice links for Parents/Carers
- What is love? Recognising healthy relationship – including risks whilst online

Healthy Schools: The Healthy Schools Network and Support Service helps schools to build resilience among their children and young people to maximise their health and wellbeing so they can reach their full potential. The CYP team work closely with HS, collaborating and ensuring resources are current and up to date to support teachers delivering PSHE curriculum. Subjects of note include all aspects of online safeguarding including online exploitation.

Little Eyes and Ears (East Cambs Community Safety Partnership): Little Eyes and Ears programme provides a platform for Children and young people to become more aware of the issues that can undermine their personal safety and emotional

wellbeing. The CYP team, work closely with CE&E creating deliverable and informative packages for the programme which can be used as a free resource by teaching staff. Resources in relation to online CCE/CSE are listed above.

Safety Zone Programme: The Safety Zone programme is designed for year 5 and 6 pupils where they can visit a fire station to take part in a range of interactive workshops run by the fire service and partner agencies, all focused on staying safe. All participating pupils will receive a workbook complete with a variety of activities which will complement their learning from the interactive workshops. Cambridgeshire Constabulary Children and Young People team have participated with this event to create a package specific to cyber safety awareness, including online child sexual abuse and exploitation.

Transforming Lives: Transforming lives is a targeted early intervention programme that works in partnership with other professionals to reduce the risk of young people (aged 11-16rs) becoming involved in crime such as ASB, Sexual Exploitation, violence, and gangs. A referral form must be completed by a professional working with the young person and evidence a level of emerging risk-taking behaviour. The objective of the programme is to provide the young people with information, knowledge, and tools to help build their resilience and make informed positive choices. There are 8-10 weekly session which are all carried out within an educational facility and presented face to face with the students by selected professional on a variety of related topics such as drug awareness, ASB, and exploitation. Cambridgeshire Constabulary participate in the programme by presenting two of these sessions which are in relation to knife crime and cyber safety awareness including online exploitation.

Cambs Against County Lines: primary school package: Collaboration of partnership work between Cambridgeshire Constabulary Children and Young People Team, Healthy Schools, Cambridge Community Partnership and Cambridge City Council. This package is offered as a free resource for primary schools which consists of 3 animated videos with complementary lesson plans that turn the topics into full learning sessions. The three topics include: County Lines/exploitation (inclusive of online exploitation), knife crime and recognition of healthy friendships.

Kids Safety Net: Collaboration of partnership work between NSPCC and other partner agencies including Cambridgeshire Constabulary Children and Young People Team. Kids Safety Net is a multi-agency campaign for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough to help support parents and carers to help keep children safe in their online world. The campaign aims to raise safeguarding awareness of how children and young people experience the online world including risks such as Grooming, searching, inappropriate/harmful content, sharing of information. The six-month campaign will include, parent/carers workshops, provide resources and tools for professionals including lesson plans for teaching staff, poster competitions for children and signposting for further ongoing support.

Recommendation 13

With immediate effect, chief constables should satisfy themselves that their crime allocation policies make sure online child sexual abuse and exploitation cases are allocated to those with the necessary skills and training to investigate them.

Force response: We have a clear policy that ensures our POLIT investigates all such offences and that there is a clear training regime in place to maintain our investigative standards. We have a wider Investigative Improvement Strategy that went live in March 2023 that pulls together 4 key pillars of investigative excellence: supervision and investigative support (introducing an online portal of resources and advice); Victim Focus; recruitment, retention and training; and prevention.

All investigations that involve Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM), Online Child Abuse Group (OCAG) and Under Cover On Line (UCOL), Peer to peer and Online Child Safeguarding And Exploitation (OCASE) (with adult offenders) allocated to the POLIT. Cambridgeshire POLIT has a far broader remit than other Forces, ensuring that these high-risk areas are retained within a team specialised to investigate, as opposed to allocation to non-specialist CID or neighbourhood teams.

Recommendation 14

With immediate effect, chief constables should make sure their force meets any existing recommended timescales for activity targeting online child sexual abuse and

exploitation and arrange their resources to meet those timescales. Then, six months after the new prioritisation tool is implemented, they should carry out a similar review.

Force response: We continue to work tirelessly towards all the targets set around online Child Sexual Abuse / Exploitation offending. We are currently revising our risk / performance management strategy for our POLIT in order to continue to drive improvements. This will again be regularly reviewed and scrutinised.

Recommendation 16

By 31 October 2023, chief constables should work with their local criminal justice boards to review and, if necessary, amend the arrangements for applying for search warrants. This is to make sure the police can secure warrants quickly when children are at risk. This review should include the feasibility of remote communication.

Force response: This will be undertaken by a combination of our Business Leads of Criminal Justice and POLIT / ISCD. We have strong relationships with our Crown Prosecution Service and Criminal Justice partnership colleagues and will ensure that the processes are efficient and wholly understood and maintained to ensure they can be accessed and delivered effectively in all CSA/E cases emanating from online offending.