

What is Child Exploitation?

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It happens where a person or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Child Criminal Exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of a person under the age of 18 and may coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under that age into any activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may be exploited even if the activity appears consensual (i.e. moving drugs or the proceeds of drugs from one place to another). Child Criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also happen online.

Why do you need to know about Child Exploitation?

- Camping, Caravan parks, self-catering accommodation, and Bed and Breakfasts, are often used as a place to exploit and abuse children and young people. There are criminal offences aligned with child sexual and criminal exploitation which could have damaging consequences for a hospitality business, including a possibility of prosecution, action being taken against a premises, their licence and reputational and/or financial damage.
- It is the responsibility of premises license holders and their managers to ensure appropriate measures are in place at venues for the protection of children from harm.
- This is a legal requirement under the Licensing Act 2003 and there are legal implications if you do not have safeguarding protocols, or do not act if sexual exploitation of children happens, or is believed to have happened, on your premises.
- Under Section 116 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 the Police have powers to serve a notice on a hotel, B&B owner, operator, or manager requiring guest information in connection with child exploitation.
- This notice can be served when an officer reasonably believes a premises has been or will be used for the purposes of: (a) Child sexual exploitation, or (b) Conduct that is preparatory to, or otherwise connected with, child Sexual exploitation.

What actions are required to protect your business?

- You should accurately document the details of anyone staying within your establishment (name, address, telephone number and date of birth) and ask for a copy of photo identification from your guests.
- Keep refusal records.
- Have a safeguarding policy, whereby staff can escalate their concerns quickly.

Indicators of child exploitation.

- Last minute/walk-in bookings, late at night.
- Guests only using the room/site/accommodation for a few hours, with no notification of leaving.
- Guests refusing to provide identification when checking in.
- Guests refusing to leave credit card details, or with no identification.
- Guests with a local address booking the accommodation, rushing to check in.
- Guests checking in with little or no luggage.
- Guests insisting on paying in cash.
- Guests requesting accommodation that is isolated, or near the exit to the premises.

- A frequent guest of your accommodation seen with different young people.
- Bookings made in a different name to the person checking in.
- Guests arriving and asking for a specific room/accommodation name or number, but they don't know the name in which the room is booked.
- Visitors to your accommodation who do not have a booking.
- Guests who don't want their accommodation cleaned.
- Guests who appear secretive about who they are with.
- High footfall to a particular accommodation.
- Repeat visitors to the accommodation/site at irregular hours, day, and night.
- Young people meeting others in your public areas, or car parks,
- Noise complaints.
- Signs of alcohol, drug, or substance misuse and/or condom wrappers

Information for bookings staff:

- Online bookings, has the person given their full name and place of residence?
- Are you confident that your online booking system provides enough details for each reservation?
- Does the identification upon arrival, align with the booking details?
- What is your policy when guests arrive without identification?

How to help the young person

- Ask them if they are alright?
Do not serve them alcohol or allow another person to buy them an alcoholic drink.
- Are they receiving unwanted attention?
- Ask whether they know who they are with?
- Ask if they would like you to call call a licensed taxi for them?
- Would they like to use the phone call a parent/carer, or would they like you to call them?
- Look at your CCTV footage.
- Call your manager as soon as possible and gather any relevant information.
- Write down detailed descriptions of any suspected people.
- Write down a detailed descriptions of the children and young people who you are concerned about.
- Secure any CCTV footage
- Keep safe any information regarding key card usage.
- Secure any information regarding items left behind.
- Lock the accommodation until police arrive.
- Report any relevant registration number plates.
- Write down any observations that concern you in your incident log.

Safeguarding

- Do you have a safeguarding lead, and keep refusal records?
- Do you check that a young person is over 18 if they have made a booking?
- How often do you walk around your accommodation in areas which are unlit?
- Which entrances and exits do you keep open after 10pm?
- Do you share information with hospitality organisations and the police?
- How often do you review your safeguarding policy?
- What aide memoirs do you have for your teams?
- Do you offer any training to your teams on safeguarding?
- Looking at 'gender bias', and stereotyping? For example, there is an assumption that exploitation means 'an older man with a younger woman'.

Exploitation of children and young people can happen at any age, and with any gender of young adult or older adult.

If something doesn't feel right, it usually isn't. Say something to keep children safe so that they are not hidden in plain sight.

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