



August 2026 annual report

Harm Outside The Home and Exploitation

The Purpose and Focus of this Report

This report focuses on Oxfordshire's;

- Current picture of Harm Outside the Home and exploitation
- The key achievements delivered through partnership working over the past 12 months.
- How we compare regionally and nationally
- Outlines how the Adolescence and Prevention Service alongside wider children's social care, Thames Valley Police, education, Health, Community Safety and Voluntary Sector partners are working together to identify risk earlier, protect children, disrupt exploitation and improve outcomes.

To note:

Throughout this report children are referred to as such, and not young people, to ensure adultification is avoided.

Definition

- As children grow and develop, they start to spend more time away from home. Some children experience abuse outside of the home, from individuals, groups of people or gangs who are not connected to their family. These people can be adults or other children and young people. The abuse can happen in various settings. We call this Harm Outside the Home (HOTH). Harm Outside the Home is also known as 'extra-familial harm', 'contextual safeguarding' or 'child exploitation'.

Exploitation

- Exploitation occurs when an individual or a group of people take advantage of another person, to the benefit of the abuser. This often means getting the person who is being exploited to do things they might not otherwise do. The abuser does this by having power over the other person. Abusers will often identify something that a child wants or needs. It could be something physical like money or expensive clothes, or it could be emotional, like affection or attention. They will give the child what they think they want, but they **will** expect something in return for this.
- **HOTH (Harm Outside the Home)** describes the harm itself—such as exploitation, serious youth violence or abuse occurring through peer groups, schools, neighbourhoods or online.
- **ROTH (Risk Outside the Home)** is the safeguarding framework used to identify, assess and respond to the risk of that harm.
- HOTH is **what is happening**; ROTH is **how services respond**.

Exploitation

- **All forms of exploitation always involve a power imbalance between the person or people causing the harm and the victim. It can occur in places such as;**
- Schools
- With groups of other children and young people
- In public spaces such as parks
- Online
- In the wider community, such as hotels, shops, taxis and food outlets.
- Keeping children and young people safe beyond their homes requires a contextual approach to identify and respond to risks and harm.
- Contextual safeguarding means working together with parents/carers, their family network and people in the wider community who have influence locally and are the 'eyes and ears' on what is happening in their community. This could include schools, sports clubs, faith communities, youth clubs, housing officers, neighbourhood policing, and community guardians such as bus drivers and local businesses.

Identifying Harm Outside The Home (HOTH)

- It is important to remember that some children's behaviours may simply be part of normal child and teenage development. However, it is important to pay attention to changes that may seem unusual for that child. Often, a shift in behaviour, especially if it is out of character, can be one of the most significant signs that something might not be right for that child.
- **Any** child can become a victim of exploitation. It is important that practitioners and parents are aware of the possible warning signs and indicators that could suggest the child is at risk of or is being harmed.
- Oxfordshire continues to see children affected by child sexual exploitation, child criminal and drug exploitation, online exploitation and serious youth violence. These risks often intersect with missing episodes, school absence, SEND, trauma, peer relationships and wider community contexts.
- As a result, a multi agency, joined up approach is required when working with harm outside the home to ensure parents do not feel blamed and are fully supported when they are doing all they can to keep their children safe and the risk is coming from elsewhere.
- Harm outside the home remains a significant safeguarding and community safety priority. Partners are using evidence to focus on prevention, identify risk earlier and sustain coordinated protection, disruption and support where need is greatest.

Context of missing children

- During 2025/26, 1909 children have been reported missing, compared to 2355 the previous year. This is reduction of 19%
- Of those children reported missing 1050 were males, 859 were females; 2 were indeterminate
- The majority of missing children in Oxfordshire have had one missing episode which has been reported. A return home meeting has taken place to understand the context of this, with no further issues or repeats.
- At the other end of the scale, only 14 children have been missing repeatedly over 20 times. All of these children were children we care for, in homes placed outside of Oxfordshire. They have told us that the context around them going missing has been to return to Oxfordshire to see parents. This tells us that regardless of circumstances outside of the home including exploitation concerns, children's bonds with their parents are a priority. We need to focus wherever possible on ensuring children remain at home within their local communities with support to prevent further trauma and increased risk.

Frequency	Total
1	353
2-4	150
5-9	44
10-14	20
15-19	10
20+	14
Grand Total	591

PRIMARY REASON FOR GOING MISSING:	NO OF YOUNG PEOPLE	%
To be with friend/partner	854	54%
Relationship difficulties with parent/carer/family	277	18%
Mental health/well-being issues	106	7%
Accommodation/placement issues	70	4%
Gang/peer network	61	4%
Education, training or employment issues (incl. bullying)	50	3%
Contact with biological family	47	3%
To access drinks/drugs	42	3%
Relationship difficulties with friend/partner	34	2%
Child drug exploitation (CDE)	21	1%
Criminal exploitation	7	0%
Child sexual exploitation (CSE)	4	0%
Not recorded	1	0%
Grand Total	1574	

Exploitation screening tools April 25-March 26

(multiple concerns can be raised on individual screenings, total 393 tools completed)

Top 10 exploitation concerns identified		
Concern	Number	%
Poor school attendance	283	72.0%
Parents struggling to manage behaviour	249	63.4%
Seen with unknown adults or older children	221	56.2%
Recent change in behaviour	212	53.9%
Alcohol or substance misuse	203	51.7%
Seen at hotels, pubs, nightclubs or travelling to other towns/cities	199	50.6%
Concerns regarding friendship group	197	50.1%
Change in self-care/hygiene	183	46.6%
Significant trauma or loss	174	44.3%
Reduced timetable	135	34.4%

National Referral Mechanism Referral demographics

AGE					GENDER				
	2025		2026			2025		2026	
11	1	2%	0	0%	Male	51	86%	39	81%
12	1	2%	1	2%	Female	8	14%	9	19%
13	1	2%	2	4%	All referrals	59		48	
14	6	10%	9	19%					
15	13	22%	9	19%					
16	20	34%	14	29%					
17	17	29%	13	27%					
All referrals	59		48						
ETHNICITY					EXPLOITATION TYPES				
	2025		2026			2025		2026	
Any Other Black Background	1	2%	2	4%	CCE	3	5%	1	2%
Any Other Ethnic Group	4	7%	0	0%	CDE	40	68%	32	67%
Any Other Mixed Background	3	5%	2	4%	CSE	3	5%	8	17%
Any Other White Background	2	3%	3	6%	Forced Labour	9	15%	6	13%
Arab	1	2%	0	0%	Smuggling	1	2%	0	0%
Bangladeshi	2	3%	1	2%	N/A for NRM / No Exploitation	6	10%	1	2%
Black African	5	8%	9	19%					
Black Caribbean	1	2%	3	6%					
Chinese	1	2%	0	0%					
Gypsy/Roma	0	0%	1	2%					
Indian	3	5%	0	0%					
Not Obtained / Refused	1	2%	2	4%					
Pakistani	0	0%	1	2%					
White British	31	53%	16	33%					
White and Asian	2	3%	2	4%					
White and Black African	2	3%	2	4%					
White and Black Caribbean	0	0%	4	8%					
All referrals	59		48						

The last 12 months (2025/26)

Indicator	Past 12-month position	What has changed or emerged
Exploitation screening and identification	Between April 2025 and March 2026, exploitation screening tools increased from 266 to 396, an increase of 130 tools.	The increase suggests that exploitation and harm outside the home are becoming more visible in the system. It may reflect improved awareness and identification, as well as continuing levels of demand and complexity.
CSE occurrences in Oxfordshire	Oxfordshire recorded 214 CSE police occurrences in 2024/25, a reduction from 236 in 2023/24.	This represents a 9.3% reduction over the year. However, Oxfordshire remained the highest-volume local command unit for CSE occurrences across the Thames Valley profile.
Quarterly CSE crime trend	Between January and March 2026, Thames Valley recorded 134 finalised CSE crimes, compared with 96 in the same quarter in 2025.	This represents a 39.6% regional increase in finalised crimes. Oxfordshire also contributed to a 19% local command unit increase, showing that the past 12 months include a changing and persistent CSE picture.
Locality variation in risk	Past-year partnership data shows variation across Oxfordshire, with reductions in Oxford City and South and Vale, but increases in Cherwell and West Oxfordshire.	Oxford City reduced by 11.2% and South and Vale reduced by 7.78%, while Cherwell increased by 31.25% from 672 to 882 and West Oxfordshire increased by 5.66% from 389 to 411.
NRM referrals and exploitation type	In the most recent NRM comparison, Oxfordshire recorded 48 referrals in 2026 to date, compared with a total of 59 in 2025.	Child drug exploitation remained the dominant recorded exploitation type, accounting for 67% of referrals in 2026. Child sexual exploitation increased to 17.

Regional and National comparisons

Prominent area	Oxfordshire	Regional / national comparison	Significance
Child drug exploitation dominates NRM	48 referrals in 2026 (59 in 2025); drug exploitation: 67% (68%).	National referrals: 23,411 in 2025 (+22%); criminal exploitation ≈ half of child referrals.	Oxfordshire’s profile is more concentrated on drug exploitation and county-lines harm.
CSE remains high in Thames Valley	214 occurrences in 2024/25 (236 prior); Q1 2026 contributed to a 19% rise.	Oxfordshire: 24.18% of Thames Valley cases; regional crimes rose 96→134 (+39.6%).	Annual fall is positive, but Oxfordshire remains the highest-volume local unit.
Exploitation risk is more visible	Screening rose 266→396 (Apr 2025–Mar 2026): +130.	National evidence is spread across slavery, exploitation, online, missing and contextual harm.	Consideration needs to be given as to whether this is due to better recognition, rising risk or both—and ensure responsive prevention through TYSS takes place.
Older adolescents dominate referrals (NRM)	Most referrals involve ages 14–17; ages 16–17 are the largest groups.	Nationally, criminal exploitation is prominent among UK national children.	This picture supports the need for specialist adolescent responses spanning missing, peers and education – as provided through the SAFER team and partners looking contextually.
Boys remain the majority; girls are increasing	Boys: 81% in 2026 (86% in 2025); girls: 19% (14%).	Boys are more visible in criminal or drug exploitation; girls’ exploitation can be less visible.	Maintain the response for boys and strengthen identification of girls.
Risk varies by locality	Cherwell: +31.25% (672→882); West Oxfordshire: +5.66% (389→411); other areas fell.	Geography reflects routes, peers, markets, deprivation, online activity and opportunity.	Target prevention, youth work, schools and disruption where risk rises.
Education and attendance signal risk	Poor attendance recurs with older associates and parental difficulty managing behaviour.	Absence, exclusion, unmet SEND, missing and online harm link to exploitation nationally.	This picture supports the need for focus on attendance, exclusion and SEND in SAFER and MACE responses.



Oxfordshire's Response to Harm Outside the Home and Exploitation

Oxfordshire's response to Harm Outside The Home and Exploitation is built around an integrated partnership model of which the Adolescence and Prevention Service is intrinsic to this.

It brings together a wide range of multi agency, support services that reflect a shared focus and understanding that children may be harmed through peer groups, schools, neighbourhoods, online spaces, transport routes and wider community settings.

It recognises that safeguarding must build safety around the child, their family, the people involved, and the places and contexts where harm is occurring and must be supported by a whole system approach.

Children affected by exploitation are recognised as children first and as victims of abuse. The service promotes language and practice that avoids blame, understands the impact of coercion and trauma, and supports young people, parents and carers to feel heard, believed and actively involved in safety planning.

Oxfordshire's Risk Outside The Home (ROTH) model

- Oxfordshire's ROTH model recognises that parents are often doing all they can to appropriately safeguard their children. Despite this, children remain at risk of significant harm due to ROTH.
- The Oxfordshire ROTH model provides a clear bridge between the Family First reform and the national policy direction emerging from the Home Office response to group-based child sexual exploitation. By recognising that children experience risk beyond the family home a ROTH plan strengthens the Family First emphasis on earlier, more relational and whole-family help, while ensuring that extra-familial harm is not misread as a parenting issue alone.
- A ROTH-informed Family First approach therefore enables local systems to respond both earlier and more intelligently: supporting families, building trusted relationships with children, and coordinating safeguarding, policing, youth justice, education and community safety activity around the places, people and networks where harm occurs.
- Over the past 6 months, children's social care have been piloting a ROTH pathway as part of its Families First model. It provides a consistent safeguarding response where the primary risk sits outside the family home. SAFER support statutory assessments to ensure relevant contextual information is included and fully considered. Extra-familial harm is treated with the same seriousness as significant harm within the home, (Child Protection) while reducing parental blame and working with parents and carers as partners in relational, child-centred safety planning.

The Adolescence and Prevention Service Offer

- **SAFER specialist support:** The Safeguarding Adolescents From Exploitation and Risk offer provides specialist advice, consultation and direct work where children are experiencing, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, modern slavery, online exploitation, serious youth violence or other forms of harm outside the home.
- **Exploitation screening and triage:** Use of the exploitation screening tool and weekly harm outside the home triage supports earlier identification of risk, clearer threshold decisions and proportionate routes into consultation, targeted support, SAFER direct work, MACE oversight or statutory safeguarding responses.
- **MACE and multi-agency disruption:** The Multi-Agency Child Exploitation arrangements provide operational oversight for children, peer groups and contexts where exploitation is known or suspected. MACE strengthens information sharing, identifies patterns and locations of concern, supports disruption activity and ensures partners use their powers collectively to protect children.
- **Contextual safeguarding and place-based planning:** The service brings children's social care, Thames Valley Police and other partners together around the child, family, people, places and contexts linked to harm—including peer groups, schools, neighbourhoods and online spaces. This enables coordinated plans to target unsafe places, strengthen protective networks, support schools and communities, and combine diversion, additional support, community safety and disruption activity.
- **Family Bridges** provides timely, targeted support to families at risk of breakdown, helping children remain safely at home rather than entering local authority care. Practitioners use trauma-informed, relationship-based approaches to strengthen family relationships, reduce conflict, and build parents' confidence, resilience and understanding of their children's needs.

The Adolescence and Prevention Service Offer

- **Targeted Youth Support and Community Prevention:** Where risks do not meet statutory thresholds, targeted youth work, detached youth work, group work around community safety, mentoring, focused VR headset programmes, school-based intervention and community provision provide practical, relationship-based support. This includes focus on online harm, healthy relationships and protective behaviours. They also deliver Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programmes offering food and enrichment activities for the most vulnerable over the holiday periods to prevent any escalation and build protective factors around young people in communities.
- **Strive** - Oxfordshire's longer-term mentoring offer for children and young people at risk of Serious Youth Violence. It provides consistent, relationship-based support and works alongside Turnaround, Youth Justice, SAFER and other targeted services to reduce risk and improve engagement, wellbeing and positive outcomes over time.
- **Prevent** is a safeguarding programme that aims to identify and support people who may be susceptible to radicalisation. In Oxfordshire, concerns can be raised through an organisation's safeguarding lead, Children's MASH, Adult Social Care or a Prevent referral; police then assess the information and may refer the person to the local Channel panel. Channel support is voluntary and tailored to need, drawing on services such as education, health, social care, community groups and specialist mentors to help reduce vulnerability and build resilience.
- **NRM and modern slavery response:** The service supports practitioners to identify potential victims of modern slavery and exploitation, complete National Referral Mechanism referrals where required, and contribute to decision-making and planning through the Oxfordshire devolved NRM arrangements.

Impact of the Targeted Youth Support Service (TYSS)

- A total of **2,194** young people were engaged with TYSS in 2025 through 1-2-1 case work, Detached Youth work and group work.
- January – December 2025 TYSS ran **150** Detached youth work sessions, engaging approximately **553** young people in **16** different local communities.
- 228 young people were engaged in group work in schools and communities.
- A total of **1,698** young people that may otherwise not have had access to a trusted adult, diverted from antisocial behaviour or offered support or guidance in their communities.
- Of 268 children receiving 1-2-1 support, only **11** went onto statutory assessment. Of those only **2** went onto have stat involvement on CIN and **1** child became looked after

Impact of the Targeted Youth Support Service

- **1-2-1 Support Outcomes at the point of closure Jan – December 2025**
- 10% improvement in behaviour at school
- 28% - able to access to professional support such as GP, mental health professionals, teachers
- 23% - able to form new friendships and mix with others beyond their peer group
- 46%- Healthier and safer romantic relationships including sex and healthy relationship advise
- 41% – improved emotional regulation less emotional outburst resulting in harm to themselves or others
- 42% improved relationships with Family/carers
- 34% – improved relationships with friends/peers
- 33% – improved sleep and able to take part in family routine
- 40% – improved mental health and wellbeing
- 15% – less reported ASB in the community and improved relationships with community.
- 13% – No police arrests/contact during TYSS involvement
- 13% – preventing arrest
- 12% – reduction in missing episodes
- 27% – reduction in risk taking behaviours
- 23% – keep themselves safe online

Oxfordshire's Harm Reduction Unit Impact

- Oxfordshire's Police **Harm Reduction Unit** was set up in December 2024 and works to reduce harm from drug supply, county lines, child exploitation and serious violence. It uses intelligence, disruption and enforcement against those causing harm, while working with safeguarding, youth justice and community partners to protect vulnerable children, dismantle harmful networks and make local communities safer.
- Where exploiters are identified, enforcement action is considered, whether that be via HRU or another investigative department. Identification takes place through the analysis of data/intelligence and proactive opportunities being explored.
- 75 children are currently supported by the HRU and children's social care across where there is suspected exploitation is taking place.

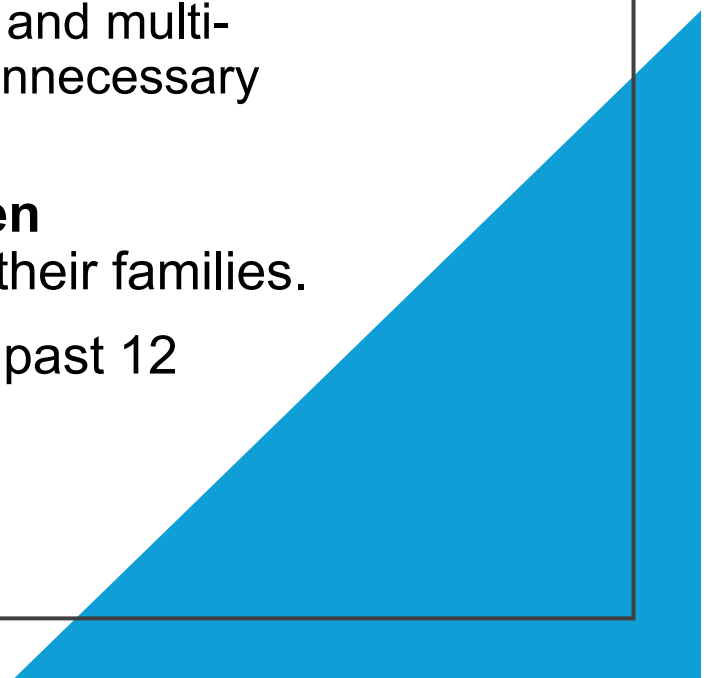
Since the introduction of the HRU:

- One operation in West Oxfordshire - 8 adult exploiters were arrested for drug supply after being identified as being involved in using children to have imported cannabis packages delivered to children's addresses.
- 5 other operations to date in relation to child exploitation have taken place
- The HRU also supports the police disruptions team with known County Drugs Lines
- In relation to Child Sexual Exploitation, the unit seeks to identify those exploiting, whether online or in person and again take enforcement action. Individuals have been arrested and prosecuted across Oxfordshire in relation to this area.

Key partnership achievements over the past 12 months and Impact for children

Main point	Evidence / change	Biggest impact for children
Clear strategy and integrated offer	The partnership HOTH 2025–28 strategy aligns prepare, prevent, protect and pursue processes across the system. Youth Justice, HOTH, NRM and targeted youth work now sit within one Adolescence and Prevention Service to respond alongside others.	A clearer route to help, less duplication and more consistent relationships with trusted adults.
ROTH pathway and SAFER expertise	ROTH gives extra-familial harm equal statutory weight. Screening is triaged twice weekly into consultation, direct work, MACE or statutory safeguarding.	Risks beyond home are identified earlier; parents and carers are partners in relational safety planning; children get specialist help sooner.
Stronger MACE and local NRM	Monthly MACE oversight links Social Care and Police HRU; fortnightly NRM panels bring safeguarding, health, justice and police decisions together.	Faster, coordinated plans protect children and disrupt unsafe people, networks and places.
Prevention, diversion and mentoring	Turnaround reached 69 children in 2025–26; only 9 of 133 completers since 2023 later received a caution or conviction. Strive adds long-term mentoring to support longer term positive impact.	More children avoid unnecessary criminalisation and receive sustained support before risk escalates.
Better use of data and intelligence	Partners combine prevalence, MACE, youth justice and exploitation data to identify trends, target resources and test outcomes.	Earlier, more localised responses—and clearer accountability for whether support is working.
	Plans include direct consultation and feedback from	Children are heard before decisions are made, and

Overall Impact for children

- Over the past 12 months, Oxfordshire's integrated response has delivered encouraging outcomes for children affected by, or at risk of, exploitation.
 - First-time entrants to the justice system fell by **53%**. Turnaround supported **69 children** in 2025/26, and longer-term data shows that only **9 out of 133** programme completers later received a caution or conviction.
 - Coordinated support for **75 children** where exploitation is suspected. This indicates that earlier intervention, trusted relationships, diversion and multi-agency disruption are helping children become safer and avoid unnecessary criminalisation.
 - Avoiding Local Authority care. 2025-26 data: **16 of 17 children (94%)** whose parents requested accommodation remain with their families.
 - **34 of 36 children (94%)** referred to our Family Bridges in the past 12 months had not entered care by April 2026.
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The impact of working together; One child's success

Starting point for support

- When support began, X faced significant safeguarding concerns linked to criminal exploitation, offending and antisocial behaviour, with frequent police attention for robbery, theft, assault and other activity.
- Intelligence suggested cannabis supply on behalf of older individuals and involvement in recruiting younger children into criminal activity.
- X was subject to a Child in Need Plan, frequently excluded from education and awaiting an Education, Health and Care Plan assessment.
- His neurodevelopmental and sensory needs had not yet been identified, contributing to difficult interactions with professionals, including police.
- Overcrowding, strained family relationships, conflict, financial hardship and housing uncertainty added pressure at home.

Approach used

- Built trusted, consistent relationships using solution-focused approaches, elements of CBT and Mental Health First Aid principles.
- SAFER, Youth Justice and other practitioners used motivational interviewing and consistent messages to support reflection and positive choices.
- Provided education about criminal exploitation, county lines, joint enterprise, peer influence and “guilty by association”.
- Used positive male role models to offer challenge, encouragement and practical support.
- Combined family-focused and strengths-based practice with trauma- and neurodiversity-informed approaches adapted to X's sensory and communication needs.

The impact of working together; One child's success

Practical changes that enabled progress

- Police adapted how they approached X after understanding his sensory needs, reducing escalation linked to physical contact.
- Neurodevelopmental assessments led to ADHD and autism diagnoses, helping family and professionals respond more effectively.
- PIP, welfare and housing support reduced financial pressure; no-recourse restrictions were lifted to improve access to help.
- Dare to Dream educational provider re-engaged X in education, supported by practitioner transport while SEN transport was arranged.
- Family Bridges improved communication and understanding with parents; a hotel, respite and trusted-adult placements were used when safety risks escalated.
- SAFER, Social Care, Youth Justice, police, CAMHS, education, HRU and other partners formed a persistent wraparound network
- Timing of EHCP reviews
- * Timely transport to assist with education engagement

Difference made

- No new ongoing criminal charges since January 2026, although historical matters remain in process.
- Intelligence about exploitation, cannabis supply and recruitment of younger children has reduced significantly.
- X has disengaged from previous offending peers, attends educational provision consistently and is exploring entrepreneurship and business.
- Family relationships, accountability and understanding of neurodevelopmental needs have improved; financial and housing pressures have reduced.

Next steps and multi-agency learning

- Complete Youth Justice requirements; continue exploitation-risk and peer-association monitoring, positive mentoring and family support.
- Plan the transition into education, employment, training or self-employment and clarify the long-term living base.
- Reduce Social Care and SAFER support gradually so the professional network is not removed too quickly.
- **Key learning: shared goals, timely information, adapted practice, practical problem-solving and rapid crisis responses prevented gaps and supported the whole family.**

Conclusion

- The past 12-month picture shows that exploitation and Harm Outside The Home remain significant, visible and unevenly distributed across Oxfordshire.
- The Adolescence and Prevention Service continue to use SAFER triage, specialist consultation, MACE oversight, NRM decision-making, Youth Justice, targeted youth work, education intelligence and community safety activity as a single coordinated response.
- The increase in completion of exploitation screening, the continued high volume of CSE occurrences, the regional rise in finalised CSE crimes, locality variation, and the dominance of child drug exploitation in NRM referrals all point to the need for targeted locality prevention, stronger disruption activity, trauma-informed support for children affected by sexual and criminal exploitation, and sustained responses in diversion and community alternatives to custody for children.
- The data demonstrates why the close multi agency working is needed. The integrated adolescent services is demonstrating that it is improving children's experiences by preventing unnecessary entry into the justice system (reduction in First Time Entrants by 53% over the past year), strengthening safeguarding responses to exploitation, improving access to trusted adults and targeted intervention earlier, and enabling partners to build safer plans around children, families, peer groups and places.
- The service will continue to use data to evidence impact over the next 12 months, ensuring children are being identified earlier, supported by trusted adults, diverted from unnecessary criminalisation and made safer in the peer groups, places and communities around them.

Conclusion continued...

- The Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs has been established following Baroness Louise Casey's national audit, which identified repeated institutional failures to protect children from organised sexual abuse and called for stronger accountability, better data, survivor-informed practice and more effective multi-agency disruption.
- There is a new Chair (police) and Vice Chair (CSC) of the OSCP CSE Subgroup who are eager to ensure there is renewed momentum in ensuring multi agency partners are appropriately held accountable for their input and work.
- A ROTH flag is now available on all children's electronic files where there is evidenced ROTH. This flag will be inputted and monitored, to ensure the fluctuation in changes in a child's life is reflected in real time on their files.
- The ROTH conference model has been piloted in the south of the county. This will be reviewed in line with discussions with TVP to ensure it provides the most robust response to children experiencing ROTH and will then be rolled out across the County.
- The Adolescent teams regularly co locate with our Harm reduction Unit colleagues and share joint training events to inform multi agency problem solving and best practice opportunities.
- Multi Agency audits are completed regularly to provide reassurance that the provision of service is adequately meeting need.

National Referral Mechanism update August 2026 –

- The Government has announced the award of a new £25 million national contract to **Barnardo's** for the **Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship (ICTG) service** on 13th July. This service will now be rolled out across **all** local authorities in England and Wales, to support child victims of modern slavery.
- The new contract will support the delivery of a nationally consistent service. Working in partnership with local authorities, police forces and other safeguarding partners, it will help ensure that all children identified as potential or confirmed victims of modern slavery can access the specialist support they need.
- This also strengthens the commitment reflected in the measures set out in the Immigration and Asylum Bill and our determination to tackle modern slavery and protect and safeguard vulnerable children and improve support for victims.
- We currently await further details for next steps.

The next 12 months

These objectives will embed current ways of working, sharpen our prevention offer and demonstrate measurable impact

01 Embed ROTH plans consistently

Apply one pathway across Oxfordshire: early screening, triage and assessment, timely SAFER input, consistent thresholds and contextual safety plans.

02 Strengthen assurance and disruption

Continue to build on use of MACE to coordinate intelligence, safeguarding and disruption around children, peer groups, locations and exploiters.

03 Target prevention through shared intelligence

Combine screening, missing, police and education data further to direct support where risk is rising, including Cherwell and West Oxfordshire.

04 Strengthen the NRM response

Sustain timely local decision-making and use learning from drug exploitation, CSE, CCE and modern slavery to improve practice and outcomes for children.

The next 12 months

05 Prevent escalation and sustain diversion

Further co ordinate Strive, Turnaround, Youth Justice, SAFER and targeted support for children at repeat or escalating risk.

07 Put children's voices into decisions

Hear children through relationships with trusted adults before formal meetings and show how their views shape ROTH, MACE, NRM, Youth Justice and SAFER plans.

06 Strengthen education and SEND safeguarding

Continue to work with schools at different levels to consider, attendance, alternative provision and SEND; treat persistent absence and unmet need as risk indicators earlier.

08 Governance for outcomes

Use quarterly reviews, improved performance monitoring and reporting, shared analysis to evidence safety, disruption, education, diversion and the experience of support and use strategically through OSCP Executive Board

Success in 12 months: consistent pathways, earlier prevention, coordinated disruption and clear evidence that children are safer.

Local Government Reform

- In light of Local Government Reorganisation decisions, it will be important to preserve a consistent countywide approach to adolescent safeguarding while adapting governance, commissioning and partnership arrangements to the new structures. Clear accountability, shared data, stable multi-agency pathways and continuity of specialist expertise will be essential to prevent fragmentation, maintain early intervention and ensure children receive an equitable response regardless of where they live.



In summary

- Oxfordshire partnership takes the continuing risk of harm outside the home and exploitation seriously and is committed to strengthening its collective response.
- **A stronger foundation**
 - Oxfordshire now has a more joined-up response, connecting specialist adolescent services, partnership oversight, prevention and disruption.
- **The priority now**
 - Embed consistent practice across the county and use shared intelligence to identify risk earlier, coordinate actions and focus resources where they will make the greatest difference.
- **The outcome that matters**
 - Children are safer beyond home, supported by trusted adults, included in decisions and helped to remain engaged in family, education and community life.