



Child Exploitation Assessment

Review of Social Care data

November 2018

Author:

Business Intelligence, Northamptonshire County Council

CONENTS

1. Key Findings	3
2. National / Regional Comparators	5
3. Social Care Assessments	6
4. Children in Care	12
5. RISE Caseload	14
6. Education	16
7. References	18

KEY FINDINGS

The below outlines the **Key findings** from the report;

- Accurately estimating the extent of Child Exploitation is difficult because of the hidden nature of the issue. There is limited nationally comparable data to able to asses if there is a greater need in Northamptonshire.
- The Children in Need (CIN) return provides us with some comparable data on factors identified at the end of assessment, this shows that Northamptonshire has **7.33% of assessments with CSE as a factor and 2.31% of assessments with gangs as a factor**. Both are significantly greater than all comparator groups (2017-18).
- During 2017-18, social care assessments were completed on **448 young people who were identified as at risk of CSE (332) or Gang involvement (83) or both CSE and Gang (33)**
- Overall, nearly 60% (258) of those identified as at risk of CSE (332) were female.
- Looking at CSE and Gang factors individually, this shows **65% of young people identified as at risk of CSE were female** and **70% of those at risk of Gang involvement were male**. While this matches the national picture, the lower proportion for each group could be due to under reporting of victims
- The **largest age group is those aged 12-15 years old**, who account for 42% of this identified as at risk. Those aged 16-20 or 5-11 each make up 23% of the identified population.
- The ethnicity of **84% of those at risk of exploitation was recorded as 'Any White Background'**, this is below the 87.5% proportion of dependent children in Northamptonshire from 'Any White Background (Census 2011).
- The profile across Northamptonshire (Age, Gender and Ethnicity) is broadly similar across each borough/ district.
- The **urban areas show a higher proportion** in comparison to rural districts or boroughs.
- Young people in Northampton account for 37% of those identified as at risk, this is in proportion with the distribution of Northamptonshire population. However, the 18% (81) from **Wellingborough is at a higher level than the area's population distribution**.
- Socially Unacceptable Behaviour was noted in 47% of the 448 assessments, this was the followed by 'Mental Health for the child' (41%), 'Missing' (40%), 'Drug Use - child' (40%) and 'Emotional abuse' (40%). **Many of these factors are also recognised nationally as known indicators of increased risk of exploitation**.
- During the academic year 2017/18, 1,206 children and young people have been **electively home educated (EHE)** at some point during the academic year (953 at years end). The number has doubled from the 2014/15 figure of 595 at some point in the year (521 at years end). Over the 6 years preceding the start of the EHE period, **35.3% of the cohort had been known to social care**, either as a Looked After Child, having a Child Protection Plan or as an initial contact. The information also shows a drop in social care contacts relating to these children post their move to EHE.

RISE Team (Reducing Incidents of Sexual Exploitation)

The 2017-18 caseload provides the following summary:

- A total of **178 individuals** were known to RISE during 2017-18.
- Of the 178 individuals, 75% had just one referral.
- 71 referrals were **declined** during the year, the most frequently given reason can be defined as '**did not meet RISE threshold**' (93%).
- The majority of individuals were **female (90%)** and from a **White (72%)** background and aged **between 14 and 16 years old (72%)**.

165 of the young people known to RISE during 2017-18 were in education during the year, the majority of individuals attended a secondary school (89.3%).

NATIONAL / REGIONAL COMPARATORS

Accurately estimating the extent of Child Exploitation is difficult because of the hidden nature of the issue. There is limited nationally comparable data to able to asses if there is a greater need in Northamptonshire. The Children In Need (CIN) return provides us with some comparable data on factors identified at the end of assessment, these are in addition to the primary need identified initially and were collected and reported for the first time three years ago. If more than one factor has been identified at assessment, each can be reported within the census. Most children will have more than one factor identified and reported. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Gangs are factors within the CIN dataset, the data below shows that Northamptonshire has a higher level of both CSE and Gangs within its assessment factors than for Children’s Services Statistical neighbour, regional and national averages.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	% change from 16-17 to 17-18	
	%	%	%	%	%		
Northamptonshire	-	4.78	5.16	6.49	7.33	Up	12.85%
Statistical Neighbours	-	2.68	3.51	3.34	3.57	Up	6.86%
East Midlands	-	3.21	4.53	4.46	4.37	Down	-2.01%
England	-	2.97	3.93	3.98	4.14	Up	4.02%

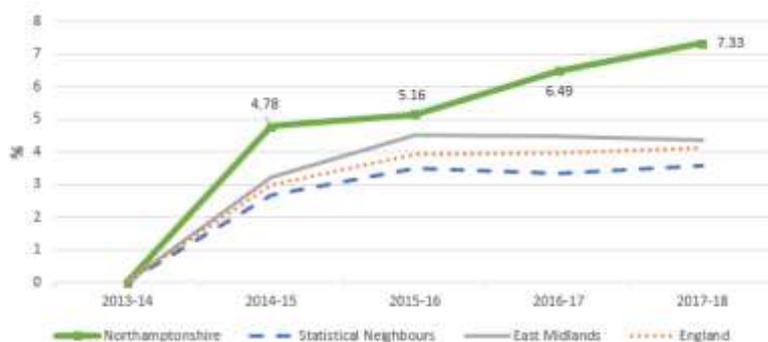


Figure 1: Assessments with factor = Child Sexual Exploitation

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	% change from 16-17 to 17-18	
	%	%	%	%	%		
Northamptonshire	-	1.11	1.68	3.44	2.31	Down	-32.87%
Statistical Neighbours	-	0.62	0.63	0.75	1.08	Up	44.44%
East Midlands	-	0.58	0.85	1.35	1.30	Down	-4.07%
England	-	0.90	1.16	1.39	1.79	Up	28.74%

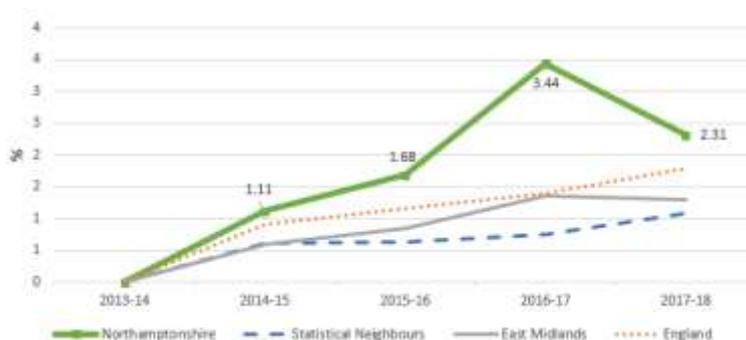


Figure 2: Assessments with factor = Gangs

SOCIAL CARE ASSESSMENTS

After an initial contact is made to the Multi Agency Service Hub (MASH), it can be decided that the concerns identified require further investigation and a Single Assessment is started. As part of this assessment the assessor can identify as many concerns as they feel are relevant to the child or young person being assessed. The outcome of this assessment will decide if a case is opened to social care and a social worker assigned. The list of 40 identified factors is set by central government, within this list are Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and involvement with Gangs.

The definition of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is new, and is not an identifying factor in the Single Assessment that is completed with children to determine if social care/level 4 intervention is required ([Northamptonshire Thresholds and Pathways](#)). As CCE is not an identifying factor we have chosen to use 'Gang Involvement' as a proxy indicator for the purposes of this assessment.

During 2017-18, assessments were completed on 448 young people who were identified in their assessment with a factor of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) (332) or Gang involvement (83) or both CSE and Gang (33).

Social Care Assessments with CSE or Gangs as a factor

Northamptonshire Profile - 2017/18

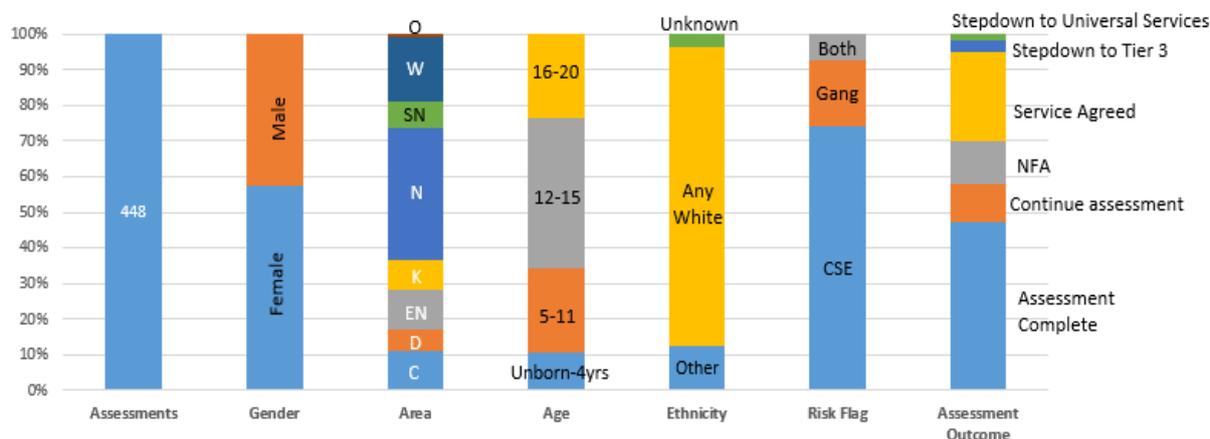


Figure 3: 2017-18 Social Care Assessments

Overall, nearly 60% (258) of those identified were female. Looking at CSE and Gangs factors individually, this shows **65% of young people identified as at risk of CSE were female** and **70% of those at risk of Gang involvement were male**, this is broadly in line with the national gender split.

The **largest age group is those aged 12-15 years old**, who account for 42% of the assessments. Those aged 16-20 years or 5-11 years each make up 23% of the assessments. The size of the youngest age group, including 9 unborn babies, suggests that the data quality issues noted during the 2016 assessment remain present in the 2017-18 data.

The issue is in part due to the method of recording initial contacts; for example, an initial contact may be made to MASH by the Police primarily concerning a 15 year old who they believe is at risk of CSE, but may also include concerns and information for any siblings. As the primary concern is CSE, this will be the recorded reason for all the children and therefore affect the age range shown.

Young people identified at risk of exploitation come from across the county. The **urban areas show a higher proportion** in comparison to rural districts or boroughs. While those resident in Northampton account for 37% of those within the assessments, this is in proportion with the distribution of Northamptonshire population. However, the **18% (81) from Wellingborough is a higher level than the area’s population distribution**. There are potentially a number of reasons for this, there could be increased gang activity in the area, or this could be due to increased awareness of professionals in this area resulting in better identification within assessments.

The largest ethnicity group of those at risk of exploitation was recorded as **‘Any White Background’ (84%)**, this is marginally below the 87.5% proportion of dependent children in Northamptonshire that responded to the 2011 census as coming from ‘Any White Background’.

For the 448 assessments a range of other factors were identified as concerns. Below is a graph with the 10 most frequently identified concerns for those with CSE or Gang factors. Socially Unacceptable Behaviour was noted in 47% of the 448 assessments, this was the followed by ‘Mental Health for the child’ (41%), ‘Missing’ (40%), ‘Drug Use - child’ (40%) and Emotional abuse (40%). Many of these factors are also recognised nationally as known indicators of increased risk of sexual or criminal exploitation.

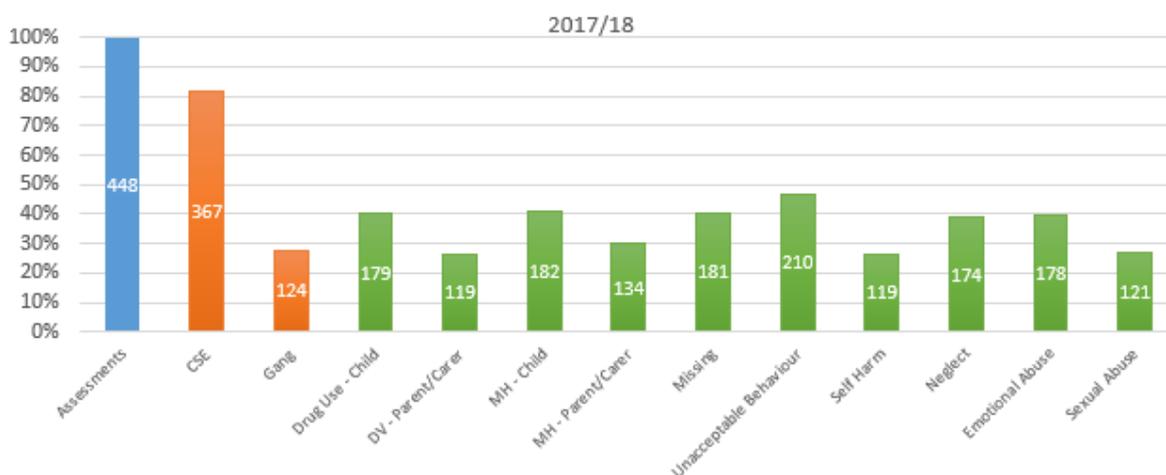


Figure 4: Other factors identified during single assessment

The data shows that across Northamptonshire the proportion of children and young people who have been identified through assessments as having either CSE or gangs as a factor in their referrals is broadly in line with

national research and evidence that is available. This points to CSE victims being white, aged 12-15 years and of a white background, with gangs this is the same but with the main cohort being male rather than female.

Are there differences across borough and districts?

When we review the data at a borough and district level the overall picture is similar, there are however, some districts where the proportion is greater or lower than the county picture in some elements. The numbers of assessments in these areas are much smaller and **before drawing conclusions of any increased risk in a particular area it is recommended that more detailed case audits are undertaken** to understand if this is greater risk/ activity in a particular area or if the training and awareness of professionals is greater and therefore driving a higher level of referrals and improved identification at assessments stage. A summary of the 448 assessments within each borough and district is provided below.

Corby had 50 assessments with CSE or gangs as a factor. Corby has the highest percentage with a concern of CSE of all borough/ districts in Northamptonshire. Corby has a marginally higher proportion of male victims (44%) than Northamptonshire (40%) and all assessments with gangs as a factor were male. Those aged 12-15 (34%) and of White background (88%) are the predominant age and ethnicity groups.

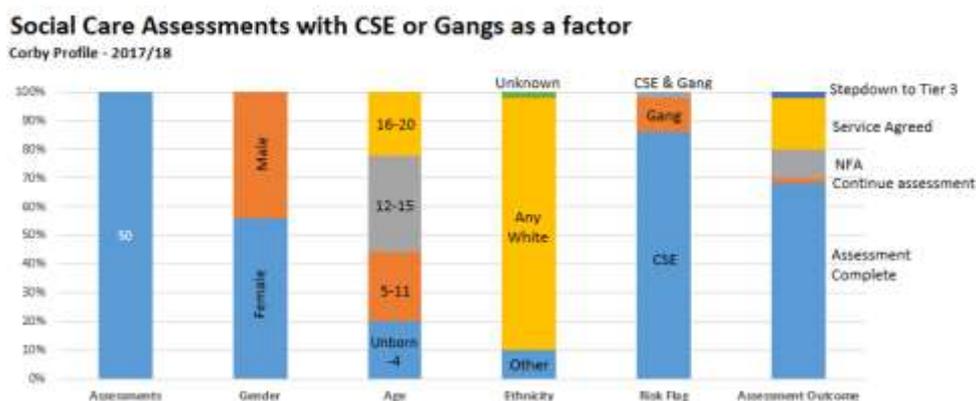


Figure 5: 2017-18 social care assessments (Corby)

Daventry had 26 assessments with CSE or gangs as a factor. There were no assessments that just noted concerns of gang involvement, this is the only area of the county where this happened. Similar to Corby, Daventry has a marginally higher proportion of male victims (44%) than Northamptonshire (40%). Looking at CSE and Gangs factors individually, this shows 63% of young people identified as at risk of CSE were female and 75% of those at risk of CSE & Gang involvement were male. Those aged 12-15 (62%) and of White background (92%) are the predominant age and ethnicity groups.

Social Care Assessments with CSE or Gangs as a factor

Daventry Profile - 2017/18

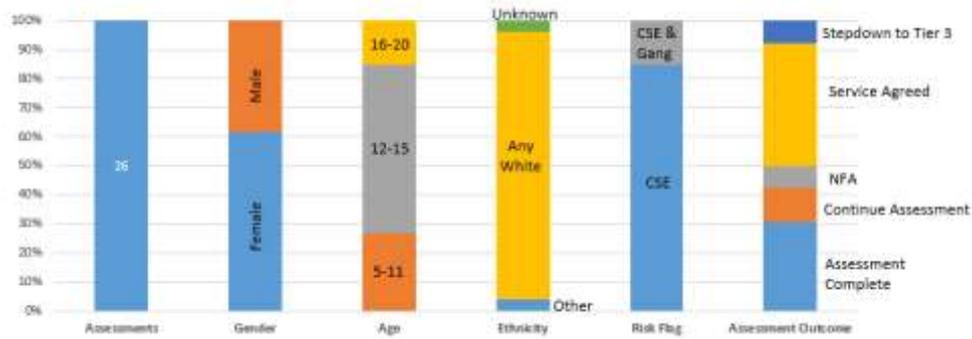


Figure 6: 2017-18 social care assessments (Daventry)

East Northamptonshire had 50 assessments with CSE or gangs as a factor. Of all 50 assessments 64% were female, only South Northamptonshire has a higher percentage of females (72%). Examining CSE and Gangs factors individually, this shows 71% of young people identified as at risk of CSE were female and 67% of those at risk of Gangs were male. Those aged 12-15 (42%) and of White background (98%) are the predominant age and ethnicity groups. East Northamptonshire and Northampton only areas in the county to show an over representation (compared to Census 2011) of those from a white background.

Social Care Assessments with CSE or Gangs as a factor

East Northamptonshire Profile - 2017/18

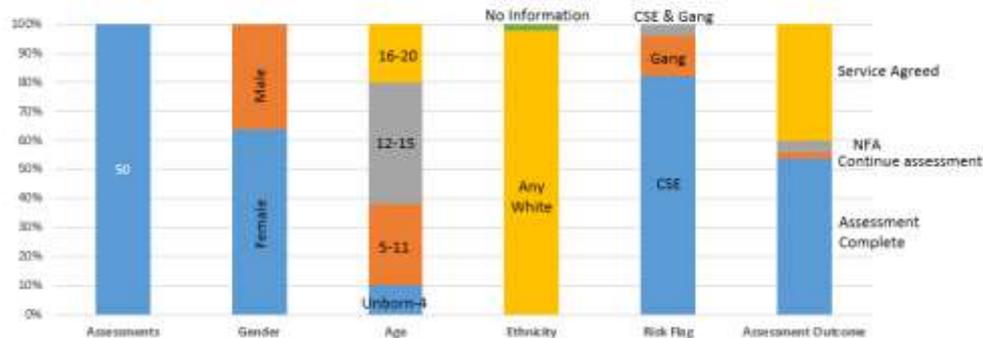


Figure 7: 2017-18 social care assessments (East Northamptonshire)

Kettering had 38 assessments with CSE or gangs as a factor. Overall 45% of those assessments were male, which is marginally higher than the overall county level (40%). Those aged 12-15 (39%) and of White background (87%) are the predominant age and ethnicity groups. Kettering doesn't have particular differences to the county levels other than a higher level in the unborn to 4yrs category, this is unlikely to be fully accurate due to the sibling recording outlined on pages 6-7.

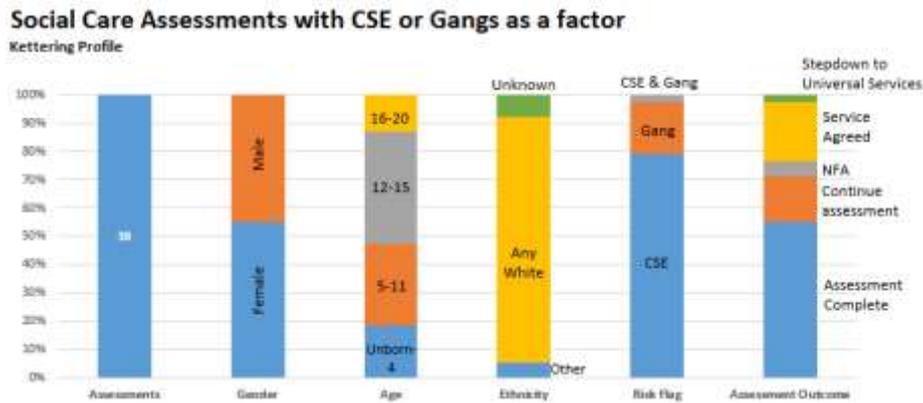


Figure 8: 2017-18 social care assessments (Kettering)

Northampton had 167 assessments with CSE or gangs as a factor, as expected due to the population size this is the highest level in the county. Northampton also has the second highest proportion of males (47%) with CSE or gangs as a factor across the county, the largest age group in the district are 12-15yr olds (44%). There is an over-representation compared to Census numbers of those from 'any white background' (85%), suggesting potential under identification within minority communities. East Northamptonshire is the only other district where this over-representation occurs.

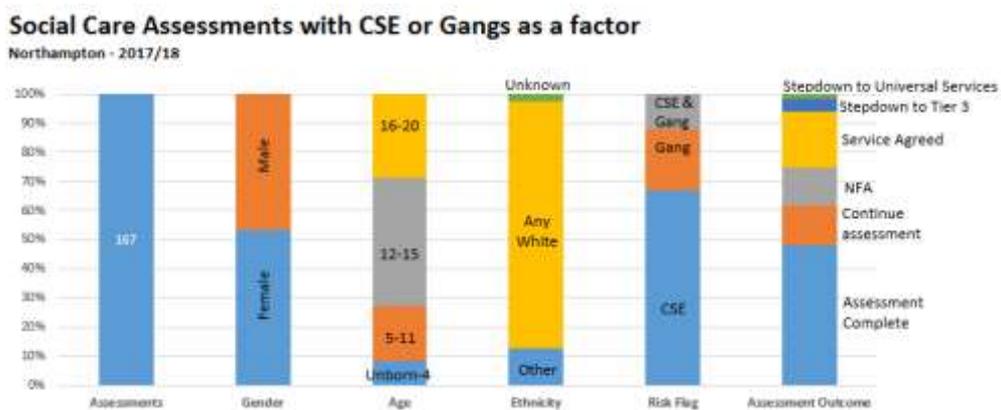


Figure 9: 2017-18 social care assessments (Northampton)

South Northamptonshire had 32 assessments with CSE or gangs as a factor, this area has the highest percentage of females (72%) of any area of the county. 100% of those assessments with gangs as a factor were male. Those aged 12-15 years accounts for 56% of assessments, with 16-20 years accounting for 28% of assessments. Those of a White background (91%) is the predominant ethnicity group, there is a small over representation of those from a non-white background in this area.

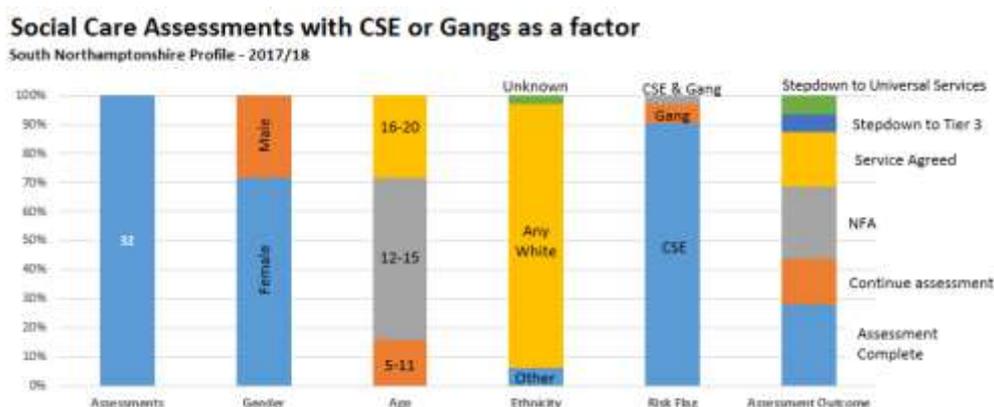


Figure 10: 2017-18 social care assessments (South Northamptonshire)

Wellingborough had 81 assessments with CSE or gangs as a factor, 69% of young people identified that had an assessment factor of CSE were female and 75% of those with an assessment factor Gang involvement were male. Those aged 12-15 (36%) and of White background (65%) are the predominant age and ethnicity groups. There is a disproportionate level of those with a non-white background (28%) compared to latest census (17.1%).

Social Care Assessments with CSE or Gangs as a factor

Wellingborough Profile - 2017/18

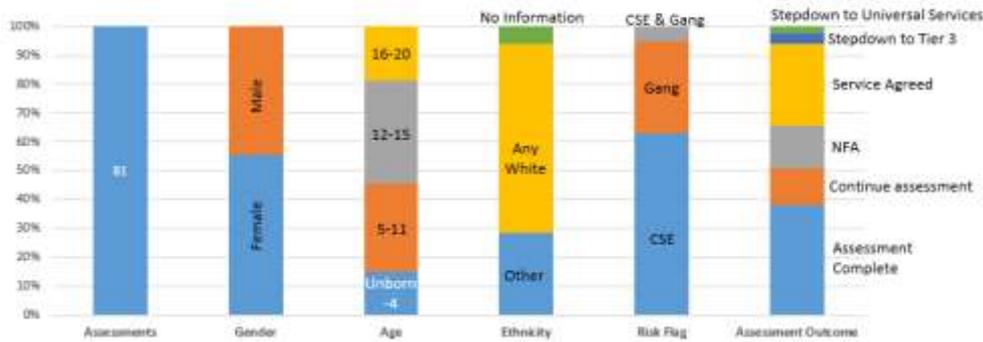


Figure 11: 2017-18 social care assessments (Wellingborough)

CHILDREN IN CARE

Most children who are in care live safely but a small number do experience harm.

The [APPG inquiry](#) into children who go missing from care found that children running away from care are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Many have had difficult starts to their lives and experienced neglect, abuse or trauma. The report found that perpetrators target children’s homes because of the high vulnerability of the children placed there and how easily they can make contact with the children. Negative attitudes from professionals – social workers, care home staff and the police – who can view children involved in sexual exploitation and children who run away as ‘troublemakers’ were also found from the inquiry to sometimes hamper support for these vulnerable children.

The evidence presented to the inquiry suggests there is a strong link between children in care who go missing and those being groomed or sexually exploited. A study by the University of Bedfordshire into child sexual exploitation showed that over half of all young people using child sexual exploitation services on one day in 2011 were known to have gone missing, and 22% were in care.

In Northamptonshire 9% of children in care had at least one missing instance in 2017-18, this is high compared to the region, but lower than both statistical neighbour and England averages. These are relatively low numbers, however there is an increased risk of being exploited either sexually or with gang involvement when in care and missing.

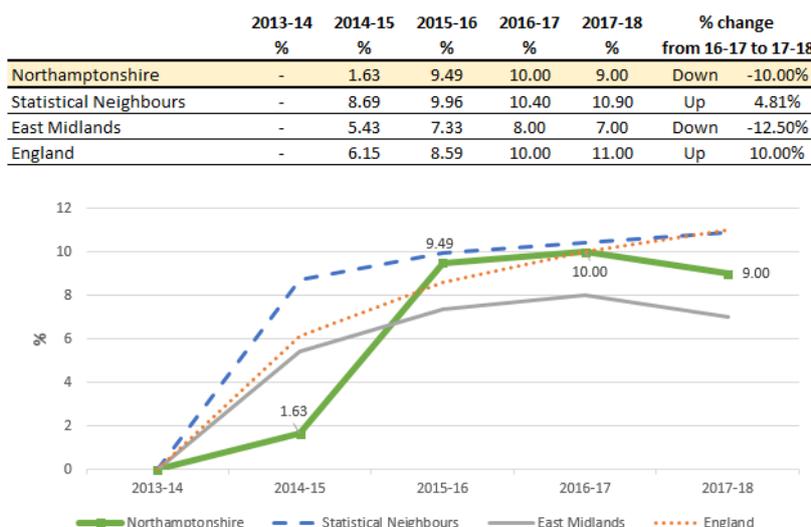


Figure 12: Looked after children with a missing incident during the year.

The number of children in care in Northamptonshire, much like the picture across the rest of the country, has increased considerably over recent years. At the end of 2017-18 there were 65 children looked after in every 10,000 0-18yr olds in Northamptonshire, a 6.56% increase on the previous year. This increase in Northamptonshire is significantly greater than our statistical neighbours (+3.88%), the East Midlands (+3.64%) or the national average (+3.23%).



Figure 12: Looked after children per 10,000 population at 31st March

RISE TEAM

RISE is a dedicated multi-agency team who work with young people considered at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation. It comprises professionals from Police, Children’s Services, and Health. The RISE team receives in the region of 20 formal referrals per month, which are completed using the NSCB CSE risk assessment. These are reviewed at a weekly referrals meeting by members of staff from all agencies’ in a bid to present as full a picture as possible. Where a young person is accepted into RISE, an engagement worker is allocated and an individual risk management plan commenced. Associated criminal investigations are normally owned by RISE Police officers. In order for an individual to be opened to the RISE they must either be open to social care already or opened simultaneously to social care, and therefore will have been included within the assessment data for social care.

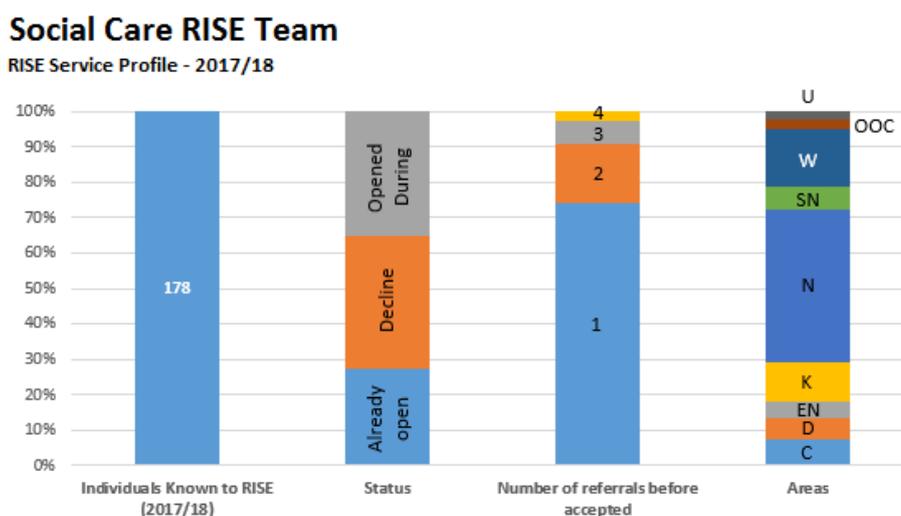


Figure 13: Case known to RISE profile 2017-18

A total of 178 individuals were known to RISE during 2017/18. Nearly a third (29%) of those were cases already open to RISE at the start of the year, with a further 37% referred and opened during the year. The remaining 40% were referred but declined by the RISE team.

There were a total of 71 referrals that were declined during 2017-18. The most frequently given reason can be defined as ‘did not meet RISE threshold’ (93%). This could be for a number of reasons including that not enough information was provided, that the identified issues would be better met by another services, such as Mental Health, or that the RISE staff didn’t feel that the level of risk warrant RISE intervention. For those where other services were thought to be more appropriate was given to the referrer with this information. The scoring of referrals is completed by the professional making the referral rather than a RISE officer.

RISE - Reason for Decline 2017/18

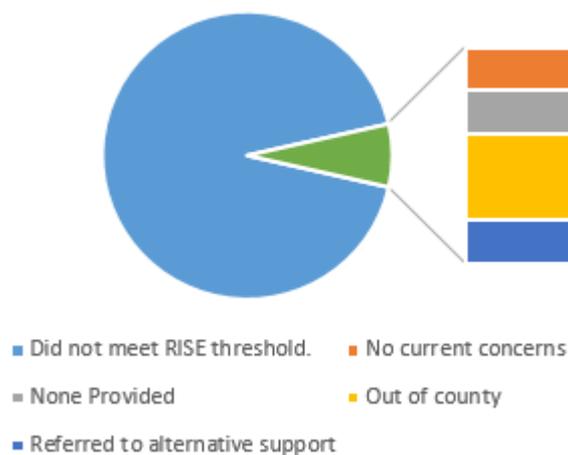


Figure 14: RISE: reasons for decline 2017-18

When looking at the profile of the 178 young people referred to RISE during 2017-18, the majority were female (90%) and from a White (72%) background. Those aged between 14 and 16 years old, at the time of the referral, account for 72% of the total. The age range was from 10 years old to 17 years. These predominant groups are the same as the national understanding of the groups most at risk of sexual exploitation.

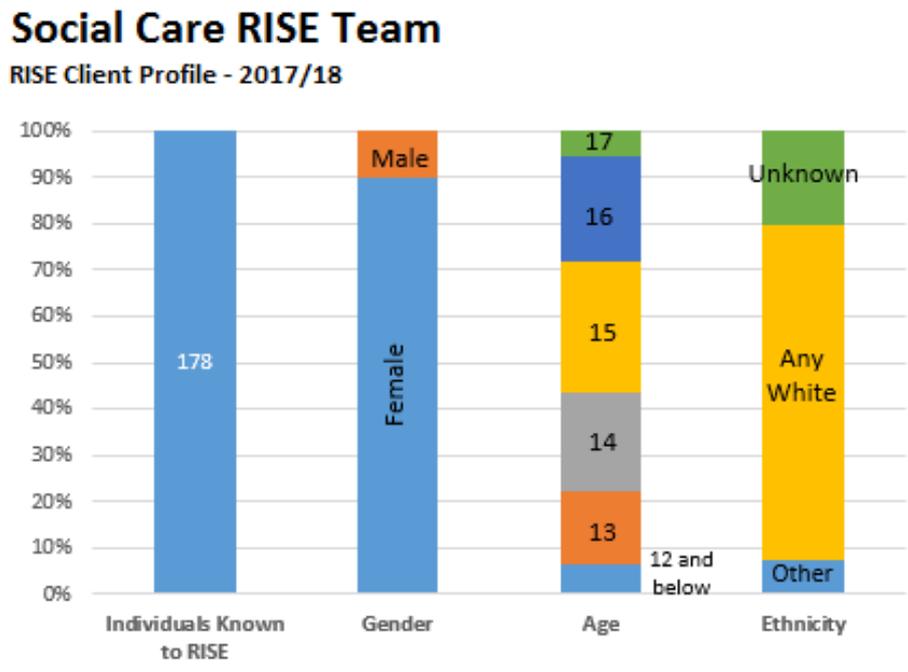


Figure 15: RISE referrals profile 2017-18

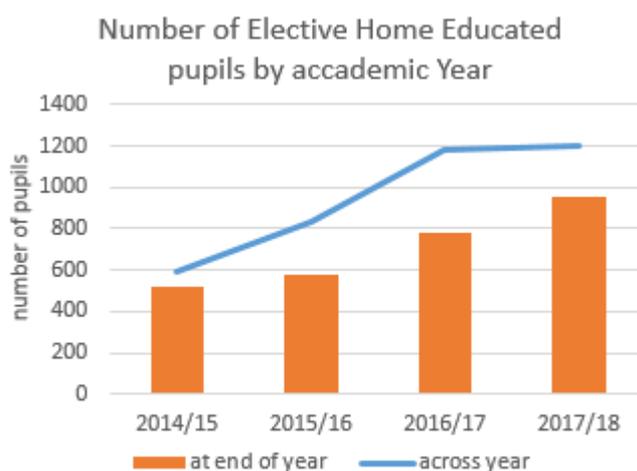
165 of the young people known to RISE during 2017-18 were in education during the year. Over 40% were the only child at their school known to RISE during the year. However, there were two schools that had 10 or more young people known to RISE attending their school, this could mean that there is a high level of risk of CSE in that area around the school, that young people at the school are recruiting others into exploitative situations or that the safeguarding team of these high numbers schools are more aware and better trained to spot the signs of exploitation and making referrals where appropriate.

EDUCATION

Elective Home Education

Schools are an effective referrer to social care in Northamptonshire, having regular contact with children through the school terms and able to identify if there maybe concerns with a child or family. Therefore, if a child is removed from school this may potentially leave the child vulnerable to increased risk of a variety of child abuse factors.

The ADCS Elective Home Education Survey 2018 estimates that 57,873 children and young people are home schooled across England, the gender is evenly split. This cohort is more 'hidden' from professional services, such as health, social care and police. In Northamptonshire we have seen a considerable increase in the numbers of children who have been elective home educated (EHE) at some point during the academic year with 1,206 children recorded within 2017-18 – this is more than double the figure from 2014-15 of 595 children. When we look at the rates per 10,000 population in each of the boroughs / districts across the county we see that, Daventry (111.2), Kettering (117.0) and Wellingborough (122.7) are disproportionately high compared with the county as a whole.



Secondary key stages make up the majority of the children

who are EHE, this is also the age group which is most at risk of both CSE and CCE. Over the 6 years preceding the start of the EHE period, 35.3% of the cohort had been known to social care; either as a Looked after Child, having a Child Protection Plan or as an initial contact. The information also shows a drop off in social care contacts relating to these children post their move to EHE.

Of those EHE during 2017-18, 12.7% had a fixed or permanent exclusion over the 7 years prior to changing to EHE; the majority of exclusions happened within the 12 months preceding the change. Exclusions are an identified indicator for increased risk of CSE and Gang involvement.

Missing from Education

Data on children missing from education is not collected at a national level and there are no official government figure or estimates for the number who are missing from education, however research by National Children's Bureau suggests that tens of thousands of children are missing out on education each year. Children missing education are defined as: 'children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school'.

A child can become missing from education for a variety of reasons. They may have moved into a different local authority or from abroad and find no available school place. They may have been withdrawn from school because of bullying, or there may be no school places available that can meet their special educational needs. They may have been unofficially excluded from school, or taken off the school roll after a long period of unexplained absence. There are increased safeguarding risks when a child is missing from education, whilst they may not be receiving a suitable education, they are also at increased risk of abuse and exploitation, becoming involved in criminal or gang-related activity, and radicalisation.

Looking at the RISE cohort in 2017-18 there were 7 young people recorded as being NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and 6 had no known education institution recorded. Where a school was known, it is evident that most of the schools, particularly those with high numbers, were based in urban areas. In line with the age profile of the young people known to RISE, 89.3% attended Secondary school and a further 3.1% attended a college.

Education Stage	Percentage
College	3.1%
Complementary Education	6.9%
Elective Home Educated	1.3%
Primary	0.6%
Secondary	89.3%

Figure 16: Education providers in RISE cases 2017-18

Exclusion from education is an identified risk factor known to increase the vulnerability and feelings of social isolation for young people, making them at risk of exploitation. Of the 178 clients known to RISE during 2017/18, 26% had been excluded from school at least once. Of those excluded, 30% had just one exclusion and a further 30% had two exclusions. While the numbers drop sharply for those with 3 exclusions (9%), the remaining numbers continue steady and end with 4% of the young people receiving 10 or more exclusions across the year.

REFERENCES

DfE: Children's Services [statistical neighbour](#) benchmarking tool

OFSTED: Children's Social Care Benchmarking Tool v2.5

The APPG for runaway and missing children and adults and the APPG for Looked after Children and Care Leavers: [Report from the Joint enquiry into children who go missing from Care \(June 2012\)](#).

Barnardo's (2012) Cutting them free: How is the UK progressing in protecting its children from sexual exploitation Barnardo's , p.5 quoting Jago, S et al (2011) What's going on to safeguard children and young people from sexual exploitation? How local partnerships respond to child sexual exploitation University of Bedfordshire, Bedford