Advice for foster carers: Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is described as a ‘hidden’ form of abuse which leaves a child/young person confused, frightened and reluctant to make any disclosures.

Grooming and sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can be confused with normal teenage behaviour. It is important that foster carers are aware of CSE and are mindful of the potential signs:

- Unexplained phone calls to the child/young person or people asking about him or her
- Going missing for periods of time or often coming home late
- Often missing school or not taking part in education
- Child/young person is seen getting into or out of cars with unknown adults
- Association with other young people involved in exploitation
- Child/young person getting money, expensive clothes and other things from an unknown source
- Having older boyfriends/girlfriends
- Suffering from sexually transmitted diseases
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- Mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing

If you believe that a child or young person in your care has become or may be vulnerable to being sexually exploited you must share your concerns with the child/young person’s social worker and your supervising social worker without delay.

If you believe that a child or young person known to you may be being sexually exploited you have a duty to share your concerns with Norfolk County Council Children’s Services.