

# 7 Minute Briefing: Contextual Safeguarding

**01 Background** Contextual safeguarding differs to our current traditional model of safeguarding which focuses largely on the risks to the child within the family. Instead, a contextual approach focuses on those external 'contextual risks' that our children also face within the community, schools, public spaces, transport, peer group and online and considers interventions to change the systems and conditions in which this type of abuse occurs

## 02 Why it matters?

Organisations, professionals, and others play a role in shaping the environments in which this type of abuse is occurring. Rather than removing children from such harmful environments (unless absolutely necessary), a contextual approach seeks to identify ways we can instead use our knowledge, skills, expertise, influence and statutory powers to change the social conditions of environments which has allowed this 7 type of abuse to occur

## 03 Why it matters? As

children move from early childhood into adolescence, they spend increasing amounts of time independently of their families. Research tells us that peer relationships are increasingly influential during adolescence. If a child or young person forms friendships in contexts characterised by violence and/or harmful behaviour

## 07 Implementing Change

[A Strategy to Tackle and Prevent Child Exploitation in Rotherham 2019-2022 – Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership \(rscp.org.uk\)](#)

Understand and respond to the link between adolescent neglect, CSE and contextual safeguarding. For more information and resources visit the *Contextual Safeguarding website*: [contextualsafeguarding.org.uk](http://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk)

## 06 What should we do?

Identify the ways in which children can change the social conditions where abuse has occurred and encourage self-responsibility for making these changes. Engage with individuals and sectors that have a bearing on social contexts i.e. shop keepers, local police, community leaders and wider council departments such as parks and licencing

## 05 What should we do?

A contextual safeguarding approach aims to disrupt harmful extra familial context rather than move young people away from them. The approach seeks to identify the ways in which professionals, adults and children can change the social conditions of environments in which the abuse has occurred

**04 What are the risks?** There are a wide range of potential risks where the prime cause of harm is outside the family. All potential risks that contribute to the harm will be considered through the holistic assessment process, taking into account any parenting/carer issues and trauma the child may have experienced historically or as a result of Contextual safeguarding

