

Transport Hub

Guidance Note

Drivers and Escorts

Child Sexual Exploitation

Operators must be aware that failure to notify drivers and/or escorts of the attached guidance may have serious consequences on that operator tendering for future contracts or indeed retaining contracts currently in place.

You will be aware from press reports of recent child protection cases in Rotherham and elsewhere that children and young people remain vulnerable to sexual exploitation which can include:-

- Being offered money, cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, somewhere to stay, a lift in a car or other similar gifts in exchange for sexual activity;
- Being threatened, bullied, or otherwise frightened into performing sexual acts to their 'boyfriend', 'girlfriend' or other people;
- In a relationship with someone older than themselves or with someone who tries to control what they do, who they see, how they spend their money, or any other aspects of their lives;
- Not always where they should be or in risky situations;
- Being pressured into doing things they don't feel comfortable with;
- Going to or being taken to unusual or known locations/premises/hotspots

Professional taxi drivers and escorts can play a very valuable safeguarding role in child sexual exploitation simply by applying their skills of observance and awareness of the children and young people who they see in their daily work. This could be their own passengers, or other young people who they see when traveling about who may be displaying any of these behaviours or causing other concerns.

If you see a child you think may be at risk then let your manager or transport operator know, or the child's school if you know it. You can also contact the team here, the police or your local Safeguarding CSE or Missing team and it is OK to ask for feedback if you are particularly concerned.

Further information is available from the WISE (What is sexual exploitation) project at www.hoveymca.org.uk/information_advice_support/wise_project

Please ensure that this information is shared with your drivers and escorts immediately and confirm this action to our Monitoring Officer, Ric Hanmer, by e-mail at richard.hanmer@eastsussex.gov.uk

Thank you for your co-operation