

1) What is risk outside the home? Abuse includes harm which is inflicted on children in extra-familial contexts. These contexts refer to the range of environments outside of children's families and homes (including foster homes and residential care) and includes within peer groups, in schools, in public spaces and online. Harm includes physical, sexual or emotional abuse and exploitation. Harm can be caused by adults or children and can be perpetrated by both individuals and groups. The range of harms are collectively referred to as 'risk outside the home'.

7) What can I do next?

- Book onto [LSCP Level 3 Training](#), including 'Risk outside the home: contextual safeguarding in practice'
- [Subscribe to the LSCP newsletter](#) to receive updates on the Exploitation Screening Tool
- Visit the [LSCP website](#) to read more about extra-familial harm and risk outside the home
- Read the [Safeguarding Adolescents in London](#) guidance or visit the [Contextual Safeguarding Network](#)

6) What will we do next? 15 recommendations have been agreed and will be delivered across the partnership, including a refresh and relaunch of the Exploitation Screening Tool to help identify and respond to risk outside the home concerns.

5) Where could our responses improve?

- Missed opportunities for early intervention and prevention led to incident led responses once risk had already escalated.
- Assessments lacked depth in professional curiosity, with a focus on immediate risk as opposed to understanding root causes and unmet need.
- Direct work with children tended to focus on present risk, resulting in a narrow understanding of children and deficit-based responses.
- Risk management tended to be reactive and missed opportunities to build sustainable safety.

2) How did we measure our local response?

Throughout January-March 2026, we undertook a multi-agency thematic audit examining the quality of multi-agency responses and seeking thematic assurances by looking at the experiences of 11 children aged 14-17 living in Lambeth who had experienced risk outside the home. 13 involved agencies completed a total of 80 audits to help us identify key themes and areas for improvement.



3) Insights from children's demographic profiles.

- Black and global majority children were disproportionately represented in the audit
- Children with suspected or diagnosed SEND were over-represented, although many of them did not have EHCPs
- Most of the children had a mental health need
- Most of the children had experienced some form of migration or transiency
- Almost all the children had experienced intra-familial harm, with domestic abuse and neglect being the most common

4) What were the strengths in our response?

- Persistent and creative efforts to engage children
- Consistent multi-agency collaboration and coordination, including procedural compliance
- Professionally curious decision-making in procedural decision-making forums
- Once risk was recognised, there was proportionate decision making to inform responses
- The input of Lambeth's Contextual Safeguarding Service made a positive difference
- Consistent involvement of community health services led to offers of holistic health intervention
- Routine use of PNC Markers
- Return home interviews were consistently offered and police missing person debriefs were consistently completed

- Recovery from past trauma, especially domestic abuse, was often overlooked as a need which required intervention and support.
- There was some evidence of adultification in that children were sometimes held accountable for their own safety and engagement.
- Notable gaps in information sharing with GPs and Housing Providers led to siloed working and gaps in responses.
- There were consistent and routine delays in arranging key interventions.
- Disruption work was inconsistent and over-reliant on the police and children's services.
- There were opportunities for enhanced senior management oversight.