

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
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QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 13th JULY 2026
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 20th JULY 2026

Question

“Further to the Minister’s response to a [question](#) in the Assembly during his appointment as Minister, regarding children in Jersey at risk of grooming and criminal exploitation, will he –

- (a) provide details of any current measures (including multi-agency responses) that are in place to protect children identified as being at risk;
- (b) state the number of children currently receiving direct support from Government or partner agencies;
- (c) advise where responsibility lies for the coordination of services for at-risk children when multiple agencies (including schools) are involved;
- (d) explain what mechanisms are in place to ensure that those with parental responsibility for an at-risk child are fully involved in decision-making in relation to how these services are provided; and
- (e) provide details of the impact the CYPES dedicated multi-agency working group has had on outcomes for at-risk children?”

Answer

(a)

Safeguarding children at risk of exploitation (all risks outside the home including criminal and sexual exploitation and risks around going missing from home) requires a coordinated response from a range of partners, including Children's Services, the Children and Families Hub Service, SOJP, Jersey Youth Service, Education, Health, Probation, third-sector organisations and other professionals involved with the child and family. Risk is assessed and reviewed in line with the Jersey Children First Framework and the Continuum of Need, ensuring that support and intervention remain proportionate to the child's circumstances. Plans are regularly reviewed, with children assessed as being at higher risk receiving increased oversight, enhanced safeguarding support and more intensive multi-agency intervention.

Children identified as being at risk of exploitation are supported through the Jersey Child Exploitation Pathway, which provides a coordinated multi-agency approach to assessment, safeguarding and risk management. Referrals can be made by parents, members of the public or professionals through the Children and Families Hub, in line with the thresholds set out in the Jersey Child Exploitation Pathway and the Jersey Continuum of Need. This helps to ensure that concerns are identified early and that children receive a response proportionate to their level of risk and need.

In 2025, Children’s Services established the Adolescent Multi-Disciplinary Team to provide targeted support to children experiencing complex adolescent risks. The team provides targeted, time-limited and outcome-focused interventions for young people who go missing from home or care, are at risk of exploitation (criminal and sexual exploitation), offending behaviour, family breakdown and other complex adolescent safeguarding risks. Working alongside children, families and partner agencies, the team aims to reduce vulnerability and risk, improve safety and wellbeing; strengthen relationships and resilience, prevent escalation into statutory or crisis responses, and support positive and sustainable long-term outcomes. The Adolescent Team plays a key role in supporting plans arising from the Daily Missing Meeting, child exploitation processes.

Children who are at risk of exploitation, or who have been reported missing, are reviewed through established multi-agency safeguarding arrangements that provide oversight, challenge and coordinated decision-making. Children's situations are discussed daily at the Multi-Agency Daily Missing Meeting, chaired by Children’s Services, and monthly at the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Operational Panel, chaired jointly by the Associate Director (Children’s Services) and Inspector of the Public Protection

Unit (States of Jersey Police - SOJP). These forums enable agencies to share information, review risk, monitor safeguarding plans and agree actions to reduce harm and prevent further exploitation.

There is a quarterly strategic MACE oversight group chaired by the Director of Children's Services with Senior Managers from across the partnership. The strategic MACE is responsible for the implementation of the child exploitation strategy, identifying any themes or trends that the partnership needs to consider, address and respond to.

(b)

As can be seen from the answers to parts (a), (c), (d) and (e), a range of protective and precautionary measures are in place to safeguard children at risk of exploitation. These arrangements have been enhanced over the past 2 years as part of an increased focus on managing risks to children.

This includes assessment and oversight by Children's Services, completion of exploitation screening and risk assessment tools, direct work with children and their families to reduce vulnerabilities and strengthen protective factors, the development of safety plans, monitoring of missing episodes and targeted interventions where risks are identified. Disruption activity is also undertaken to identify and disrupt those seeking to exploit children.

As of 14th July 2026, 63 children were receiving some level of support from Children's Services in relation to exploitation risks. It is important to stress this number varies and does not reflect actual levels of exploitation. Our risk assessments take a cautious approach to these matters, as is appropriate.

(c)

Overall responsibility for coordinating the multi-agency response for an individual child rests with the identified lead worker, supported through management oversight from the Team Manager and Head of Service. Education is represented within the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, including attendance at the Daily Missing Meeting and the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Operational Panel. This ensures that schools contribute to risk assessment, information sharing and safeguarding planning. In line with Jersey Safeguarding Partnership procedures, schools are expected to share concerns and escalate through the appropriate pathways as soon as indicators of exploitation are identified.

Where a child is not currently receiving support from Children's Services, the appropriate level of intervention is determined using the Jersey Continuum of Need. The Child Exploitation Screening Tool is used to assess risk and inform decision-making regarding whether statutory intervention is required or whether the child's needs can be met through an early help response. Where an early help approach is identified as the most appropriate response, a lead professional is appointed to coordinate support and ensure oversight of the child's plan.

Children do not need to be open to statutory services for exploitation concerns to be identified and addressed. Regardless of the level of intervention, there remains an expectation that a lead professional is identified, agencies continue to share relevant information, and risks are reviewed regularly in accordance with the Jersey Children First Framework. This ensures that children receive a coordinated response, with support adjusted as risks and needs change over time.

Schools play a key role throughout the safeguarding process through their designated safeguarding leads and wider pastoral teams. They contribute to the identification of risk, information sharing, planning and review processes, and are expected to raise concerns and initiate safeguarding pathways whenever indicators of exploitation emerge, regardless of whether the child is already known to Children's Services.

(d)

Parents and carers are recognised as key partners in safeguarding and decision-making for children who may be at risk of exploitation. Wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so, they are actively involved in assessments, planning and review meetings, including Team Around the Child meetings and wider multi-agency reviews. Their views, experiences and knowledge of their child are sought and considered as part

of decision-making, and decisions, actions and the rationale for these are shared with them in a timely and transparent way. Parents and carers are also able to access the Government of Jersey complaints and feedback procedures should they wish to challenge or seek further clarification about decisions.

It is recognised that parents and carers can face significant challenges when supporting children who are exposed to risks beyond the family home, including exploitation, harmful peer influences and missing episodes. In response, the Adolescent Team works alongside parents and carers to strengthen their understanding of contextual risks, build confidence in responding to concerns and help them navigate the support available across agencies.

To further strengthen parental involvement and support, the Adolescent Team has established a parent and carer support group. This provides opportunities for peer support, shared learning and access to information about the risks children may encounter outside the home. The group also helps parents and carers better understand the roles of different agencies and the support available, enabling them to play an informed and active role in safeguarding and supporting their children.

Building on this work, we are planning to implement the Risk Outside the Home (ROTH) framework. This represents an important development in how we respond to adolescents who experience harm beyond the family environment. The ROTH approach shifts the focus from relying solely on traditional child protection processes towards understanding, assessing and managing risks within the contexts where harm occurs, such as peer groups, schools, neighbourhoods and online spaces. It places greater emphasis on contextual safeguarding, multi-agency safety planning and strengthening the safety of the environments around children, rather than focusing primarily on family-based interventions. To support this development, work has begun in collaboration with Southampton City Council, a recognised leader in the implementation of the ROTH framework in the UK. Southampton have agreed to provide support to enable the Jersey partnership to learn from established practice, share expertise and use this learning to further strengthen the response to children experiencing exploitation and other forms of harm outside the home.

(e)

Children's Services Improvement Board has led on the implementation of the child exploitation strategy action plan since taking the lead of this work from the Safeguarding Partnership Board in 2024. Since that time, substantial progress has been made through multi-agency partnership working which has an impact on outcomes for at-risk children:

- Multi-agency arrangements have strengthened the identification, monitoring and management of risk for children who go missing or may be experiencing exploitation. Through established forums such as the Daily Missing Meeting and MACE Operational Panel, agencies now share information more effectively, enabling timely oversight, coordinated planning and more targeted interventions for vulnerable children.
- These strengthened processes are contributing to improved outcomes for some children and families. There is evidence of reduced missing episodes for some children, alongside examples of risks reducing over time through coordinated support and intervention. Families have also provided positive feedback about the difference services have made in improving safety, wellbeing and stability for their children.
- There is increased confidence across the safeguarding partnership that concerns relating to exploitation and missing children are being identified earlier, assessed more consistently and responded to through clear multi-agency arrangements.
- While exploitation and safeguarding risks continue to affect some children, stronger multi-agency arrangements, clearer processes and improved oversight mean that concerns are being identified and responded to more effectively.