ONLINE SAFETY

A THREAD THAT WEAVES THROUGHOUT ALL SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Radicalisation

- Young people being groomed via gaming and social media
- Young people's natural curiosity enabling them to find extremist videos and content online
- Content such as videos of beheadings being widely shared between young people
- Incel websites and chat forums increasingly radicalising young men into committing acts of violence
- Young people through social media becoming increasingly politicised – can then be vulnerable to predatory adults who seek to encourage more extreme positions.

Self-Harm and Suicide

- Young people following pro-anorexia accounts on social media
- Live-streaming of self harm and suicide on video sharing platforms
- The sharing of self harm images between groups of peers using Whatsapp
- Young people using internet to research increasing and more dangerous ways to self harm
- Bullies using social media to encourage self harm and suicide in their peers
- dangerous 'challenges on TikTok and Snapchat including the 'Blue Whale Challenge

Domestic Abuse

- Social media being used to stalk and threaten victims
- 'Tracking' apps and location settings used to control the victim's movements
- Smart home technology sends images to perpetrator's phone so victim feels watched and controlled at all times
- Social media used to share (or threaten to share) indecent or humiliating images of the victim
victims impersonated online (e.g. fake accounts)
- Perpetrators stealing or insisting on being given victim's account passwords.

Honour-Based Abuse

- Young people being 'watched' online by members of the family/community to check they are not bringing dishonour upon the family
- Family/community members using Whatsapp and other social media to speak to community members overseas to arrangeforced marriage
- Mobile phones and devices used to book tickets overseas for victims
- Honour-Based abuse such as acid attacks being arranged online.
- technology used to send threats to the victim or to encourage a 'forced suicide'

Child Sexual Exploitation

- Online abusers using social media and/or gaming to gain access to young people in order to groom them
- 'Sextortion' – young people blackmailed online for large amounts of money in return for images not being shared
- Indecent images of young people (originating from consensual sexting incidents) being shared on pornography websites
- Groomers and paedophiles sharing information about how to gain access to young people
- Whatsapp being used to facilitate trafficking of C/YP

Child Criminal Exploitation

- Gang-affiliated young people being encouraged to groom other vulnerable children through social media
- 'County Lines' exploitation using encrypted messenger services and 'burner phone' to arrange the trafficking of drugs and weapons (and young people)
- Fights and beatings being filmed and shared online to act as a warning to others
- Young people being publicly summoned via social media by criminal gangs
- Gang initiations being shared openly on social media then used to blackmail victims