

**Briefing for the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Education:
Mini Inquiry on Relationships and Sexuality Education**

Paper prepared in advance of NSPCC oral briefing to the Committee

4 October 2024

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All school aged children and young people should receive whole school, comprehensive and inclusive Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) across all years.

RSE can play a vital role in the safeguarding of children and young people. A whole school, comprehensive and inclusive approach to Relationship and Sexuality Education has the potential to prevent harm to children:

- **by supporting children to recognise abuse, know how and where they can ask for help, understand consent and healthy relationships, and**
- **by enabling more adults to identify concerning behaviour and know what to do if a disclosure is made.**

The RSE programme should be age and developmentally appropriate, responding to the needs of children and young people as they mature, so that they can make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives.

Introduction

This briefing has been prepared for members of the NI Assembly Committee for Education in advance of NSPCC's oral briefing taking place on 9th October 2024.

In the prevention of violence and abuse we know that teaching children and young people about healthy relationships, in an all-inclusive way, is a vitally important part of keeping children safe. Excellent quality relationships and sexuality education (RSE) is key for children as it helps them understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships and that they have a right to be safe, heard and respected. NSPCC NI believe it is vitally important in addressing key areas of violence and abuse that the development of a core RSE curriculum is prioritised by Government.

Children and young people should be given the necessary knowledge and skills and enabled to develop attitudes and values about relationships, healthy, unhealthy and abusive, sexual identity and intimacy. The RSE curriculum should address the child's right to be safe, ensuring that all children and young people are taught to recognise abuse and know how and when to speak to a trusted adult about any worries or concerns.

A Whole School Approach

International research¹ shows that educational programmes can improve children’s understanding of what constitutes abuse or inappropriate behaviour and increase the likelihood of young people coming forward to disclose experience of abuse. Disclosure, especially at the time of abuse, is rarely a straightforward process of simply saying they have been abused and there are several different ways that a child may try to let someone know what is happening to them. ‘No one noticed, no one heard’, a research paper published by the NSPCC found that, on average, it took 7.8 years for the young people to disclose sexual abuse.² The younger the child was when the sexual abuse started, the longer it took for them to disclose.

Disclosing abuse can be difficult for young people due to a range of barriers including having no trusted person to speak to, feelings of isolation, fears and anxieties manipulated by the perpetrator, no one listened and lack of recognition of abuse by others. The ‘No one noticed, no one heard’ research details that young people’s accounts suggest their ability to disclose was hindered due to not recognising what was happening to them was abuse, or they did not have the vocabulary to describe what was happening to them.³ This theme was common with the young people who experienced sexual abuse.

RSE presents an opportunity that could help break down some of these barriers by ensuring young people have the words to describe what has happened, and by challenging victim-blaming narratives which may leave them feeling ashamed or frightened to speak up. The NSPCC research demonstrated that positive experiences of disclosures were when the child was believed, some action was taken to protect the child, and emotional support was provided.

Furthermore, we know that an adult’s immediate response to a disclosure impacts that individual child’s journey and the likelihood of other children feeling able to share their stories. A whole school approach to RSE can put a focus on safeguarding and ensuring that everyone connected to a school has a shared understanding of safeguarding. The NSPCC’s ‘No one noticed, no one heard’ research shows that unfortunately adults don’t always recognise, understand or react appropriately when a child starts to tell them about their experience of abuse or neglect.⁴ 80% of those who took part in the NSPCC research tried to tell someone about the abuse but many disclosures were either not recognised or understood, or they were dismissed, played down or ignored. The consequence being that sadly no action was taken to protect or support the young person.

Comprehensive and high quality RSE can have a positive impact on children and young people’s futures: not only helping young people to identify unhealthy behaviour, but also to develop the tools they need to build positive relationships as they grow up. Research highlights that children who

¹ Walsh K, Zwi K, Woolfenden S, Shlonsky A (2015) [School-based education programmes for the prevention of child sexual abuse \(Review\)](#), *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*

² <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2013/no-one-noticed-no-one-heard>

³ <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2013/no-one-noticed-no-one-heard>

⁴ <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2013/no-one-noticed-no-one-heard>

participate in programmes are more likely to feel that the timing of when they first had sex was right and that both partners were equally willing.⁵

Domestic and Sexual Violence

In September 2024, The Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Framework and the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy were published by the Northern Ireland Executive within a week of each other. Both these Strategies contain Relationship and Sexuality Education as a strategic priority. In order to achieve the aims and objectives of these strategies it is vital that an inclusive, comprehensive and mandatory RSE curriculum is provided to all children and young people in our society.

PSNI recorded crime figures for 2022/23 show that –

- On average, over 6 sexual crimes were committed against a child in Northern Ireland every day.
- 4,232 sexual offences were reported and 55% (2,324) of these were against children under 18.
- Recorded sexual offences committed against under 18s have more than doubled between 2012/13 and 2022/23.

It is important to note that these statistics do not represent a complete picture of the number of children who experience sexual violence in Northern Ireland. Studies have found that as many as 90% of sexual assault incidents are not reported to authorities⁶ and that as many as one-third of children do not disclose experiences of violence during a forensic interview.⁷

Measuring the scale and nature of child abuse is extremely challenging because it is usually hidden from view, and often goes unreported and unrecorded.

- An NSPCC survey of 13 to 17-year-olds found that 25% of girls and 18% of boys reported having experienced some form of physical violence from an intimate partner.
- The findings of a 2011 NSPCC study with 2,275 young people aged 11-17 suggested that around 1 in 20 children in the UK had been sexually abused.
- More recently, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has engaged in work to explore the feasibility of a new survey to provide an up-to-date measure of child abuse in the UK. In 2021, the ONS reported on the findings of the first phase of the research, estimating that 1 in 5 adults aged 18 to 74 years in England and Wales experienced at least one form of child abuse, whether emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, or witnessing domestic violence or abuse, before the age of 16 years (8.5 million people).

⁵ Kirby, D (2007) 'Emerging Answers 2007: Research Findings on Programs to Reduce Teen Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Diseases'. Washington DC: National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

⁶ [Sexual assault in Australia \(aihw.gov.au\)](https://www.aihw.gov.au)

⁷ [niccy-report-putting-the-child-at-the-centre-final-feb-2022.pdf](#)

The 2023 Education and Training Inspectorate Report on The Preventative Curriculum in schools and EOTAS noted that the more sensitive aspects of the RSE curriculum, including child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse were completely avoided, or insufficiently covered. Furthermore, the report found that only 44% of all schools/centres stated that they were delivering the topic of consent only to a small extent or not at all with 24% of primary schools reported that they were not teaching the subject of consent at all.⁸

We understand that in many scenarios, parents/carers are the first and most consistent source of education throughout a child's life. However, we must also recognise that there are children for whom home is not always a safe place as well as children who are looked after away from home and therefore it's vitally important that messages on healthy relationships are provided in school, so every child receives the same education and messages about these issues.

As of 30 June 2024, there were 2,245 children on the child protection register in Northern Ireland, an increase of 5.1% on the previous year. Physical, emotional and sexual abuse were listed as a contributing factor in 65% of all those on the Child Protection Register. Operation Encompass, a partnership between the PSNI, the Education Authority and education providers, enables officers who attend a domestic abuse call with children are present, to pass on relevant information to the safeguarding team at the child's school. This was officially rolled out in May 2023, across all 1,162 schools and EOTAS. Since the start of the 2021 school year, police have received on average 2,750 reports of domestic incidents per month across Northern Ireland, resulting in an average of 740 referrals each month. This has resulted in 23,448 referrals being made by police to the designated teacher at the relevant school.

Babies, children and young people who are brought up in a household where there is domestic abuse, are not only victims of the abuse themselves but their experience may also influence their perceptions of what a healthy relationship looks like. Unfortunately, it is also the case that there have been instances where children have been sexually abused within their family setting, by someone who is known to them. Although it is never the child's responsibility to keep themselves safe from these types of situations but rather the responsibility of adults to protect and recognise abusive situations, excellent RSE can help children and young people understand and recognise what is healthy and what is unhealthy, and what to do in situations where they are uncomfortable or unfortunately have been abused.

Good quality relationship and sexuality education is not only to protect and benefit children and young people but also to provide guidance and knowledge to teachers, especially with regards to recognising signs of abuse, dealing with possible disclosures of abuse, and appropriately addressing inappropriate behaviour within the classroom. In April 2021, Ofsted in England were asked by the Government to carry out a rapid thematic review of the prevalence of peer-on-peer

⁸ [The preventative curriculum in schools and Education Other Than at School \(EOTAS\) centres \(etini.gov.uk\)](https://www.etini.gov.uk)

sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online sexual abuse. The review report,⁹ published in June 2021, found that nearly 90% of girls interviewed, and nearly 50% of boys, said being sent explicit pictures or videos of things they did not want to see happens a lot or sometimes to them or their peers. Children and young people told Ofsted that sexual harassment occurs so frequently that it has become 'commonplace'. For example, 92% of girls, and 74% of boys, said sexist name-calling happens a lot or sometimes to them or their peers. The frequency of these harmful sexual behaviours means that some children and young people consider them normal. The review report recommendations included: specific education on sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online; high quality training for teachers delivering RSE; and training to ensure that all staff better understand the definitions of sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online abuse; are able to identify early signs of peer-on-peer sexual abuse; and can consistently uphold standards in their responses to sexual harassment and online sexual abuse.

The reality is, teachers are having to deal with increasing complexities, including online bullying and abuse, therefore they need to be efficiently equipped to address these appropriately. In Northern Ireland, as of May 2024, the Department of Education reported that 148 Risk Assessment Management Plan (RAMPs) had been put in place in relation to Harmful Sexual Behaviour in schools. It should be noted that at the time of reporting, the school year was only partially completed. In the 22/23 academic year 156 RAMPs had been developed while 122 were developed during 21/22. These figures further highlight the need for a statutory, whole school RSE curriculum that will support both children and young people, as well as their teachers and school staff.

Online Safety

The internet is an extremely valuable tool to help children learn about and explore the world. Today, social media is often a part of childhood, and an inescapable utility. Around half of UK children aged 12 have at least one social media account, despite the minimum age requirements for most sites being 13. By age 13, that figure rises to almost two-thirds.¹⁰

For children subjected to technology-facilitated abuse, the impacts can be life-changing. Despite the common misconception that online abuse is less impactful, NSPCC research has shown that the impact of 'online' and 'offline' abuse is the same, no matter how the abuse took place.¹¹ The number of children subjected to online sexual abuse could be much higher than reported because it is still an underreported and often misunderstood crime, with many children unable to raise the alarm to a trusted adult as they may be unaware that they are being manipulated.

The rise in the production and distribution of self-generated indecent imagery is also a major concern, and which we know is one of the key contributors to child sexual abuse material. This has dramatically increased since lockdown measures were introduced both in the UK and around the

⁹ [Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97822/review_of_sexual_abuse_in_schools_and_colleges.pdf)

¹⁰ Ofcom (2020) Children and parents: media use and attitudes report. London: Ofcom.

¹¹ [Impact of online and offline child sexual abuse: "Everyone deserves to be happy and safe" | NSPCC Learning](#)

world.¹² In a 2018 study of livestreamed abuse, 98% of imagery depicted children aged 13 years or younger, and 96% of the imagery featured girls.¹³

According to NSPCC research produced before lockdown, more than one in seven children aged 11-18 (15 per cent) had been asked to send self-generated images and sexual messages.¹⁴ In 2022, the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) verified 199,363 cases of 'self-generated' imagery with the most frequent age category to appear being children aged 11-13.¹⁵ Worryingly, the IWF also noted a dramatic increase in this type of imagery including children aged 7-10 in 2022, up 129% from 2021. Furthermore, calls to Childline related to sharing self-generated sexual images with other children increased by 179% between 2020/21 and 2022/23. We know that self-generated imagery is of particular concern for young women and girls, given the gendered nature of this problem and the impact it can have in schools and beyond. Moreover, girls aged 13 to 15 years are significantly more likely to report receiving sexual messages than boys (16% compared with 6%).¹⁶

It is important that young people recognise the actions that constitute online abuse and know where and how they can access help. A commonly agreed core RSE curriculum which all children in Northern Ireland can access is a crucial step towards ensuring young people are better equipped to understand what constitutes healthy and unhealthy relationships – both online and offline.

Views and experiences of young people

A recent NSPCC UK survey which included almost three hundred 14-17 year olds in Northern Ireland found that young people from Northern Ireland want to have a say in what and how they learn about RSE.¹⁷

- 61% of young people in Northern Ireland strongly agreed or agreed that they would like a say in what they learn about relationships, sex and sexuality.
- 63% of young people in Northern Ireland agreed or strongly agreed that they would like a say in how they learn about relationships, sex and sexuality.
- Young people from Northern Ireland felt that school never (41%) or rarely (27%) covers what they want to know about relationships, sex and sexuality. This can be compared with 27% of young people in other parts of the UK who said school never covers what they want to know,

¹² <https://www.iwf.org.uk/news/%E2%80%98grave-threat%E2%80%99-children-predatory-internet-groomers-online-child-sexual-abuse-material-soars>

¹³ IWF (2018) Trends in Online Child Sexual Exploitation: Examining the Distribution of Captures of Live-streamed Child Sexual Abuse Cambridge: IWF

¹⁴ NSPCC (2018) NetAware research on file.

¹⁵ [TALK and Gurls Out Loud 'self-generated' child sexual abuse prevention campaign \(iwf.org.uk\)](https://www.iwf.org.uk/news/talk-and-gurls-out-loud-self-generated-child-sexual-abuse-prevention-campaign)

¹⁶

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/childrenonlinebehaviorinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>

¹⁷ [Relationships and Sexuality Education \(RSE\) Briefing Final English to send \(1\).pdf \(sharepoint.com\)](https://www.sharepoint.com/~/sites/Relationships%20and%20Sexuality%20Education%20(RSE)%20Briefing%20Final%20English%20to%20send%20(1).pdf)

and 21% who said school rarely covers what they want to know about relationships, sex and sexuality.¹⁸

The findings of the NSPCC's survey are backed by research by the Belfast Youth Forum, which highlighted that the majority of young people who took part in its study did not believe the RSE they received in school was adequate or even useful.¹⁹ These findings are further corroborated by research by Relate NI carried out with young adults, with only 27% of 16-34 year olds stating that they found the RSE they received in school to be helpful.²⁰

Recent developments

Currently in Northern Ireland RSE is covered within the statutory curriculum under the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (primary) and the Learning for Life and Work (post-primary) areas of learning. In June 2023, the Relationships and Sexuality Education (Northern Ireland) (Amendment) Regulations 2023² were introduced. The Regulations amended the Education (NI) Order 2006, in relation to key stages 3 and 4, to include age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights covering prevention of early pregnancy and access to abortion, and Part 5 (LFLW) and Part 6 (Personal Development) of the Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order (Northern Ireland) 2007 to insert: "Receive age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights covering prevention of early pregnancy and access to abortion."

However, beyond the statutory minimum content, schools have flexibility in what they cover and when it is covered. This gives each school the scope to make its own decisions on how best to meet the needs of its pupils. The Department requires each school to have in place its own written policy on how it will address the delivery of RSE.²¹ The existing evidence has shown that non-statutory

¹⁸ The survey was completed by 936 young people across the UK. 639 (68.3%) provided complete data which could be used for analysis. The majority of the survey responses came from young people in England and Northern Ireland (46.2% (n=295) England, 44.0% (n=281) Northern Ireland, 1.1% (n=7) Scotland, 3.1% (n=20) Wales, and 0.8% (n=5) the Channel Islands). This result, when compared with responses from young people who completed the survey in other parts of the UK, suggests that young people in Northern Ireland are more dissatisfied with current RSE provision in schools. 48% of young people in other parts of the UK said school, 'never,' or, 'rarely,' covers what they want to know about relationships, sex and sexuality, compared to 68% in Northern Ireland.

¹⁹ [Any use? report \(belfastcity.gov.uk\)](https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/any-use-report) Over half of young people surveyed did not feel their right to access adequate RSE was being met. While the vast majority of young people (86%) felt that school was the best place to receive RSE, only 66% of respondents said they had actually received RSE in school.

²⁰ [23% of 16-34 Year Olds In NI Didn't Find RSE At School Helpful \(relateni.org\)](https://www.relateni.org/23-of-16-34-Year-Olds-In-NI-Didn-t-Find-RSE-At-School-Helpful) 8% of 16-34 year olds reporting that the RSE they received was 'very helpful' to them in navigating and maintaining healthy relationships and a further 19% saying it was 'somewhat helpful'.

²¹ Department of Education Circular 2015/22 <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201522-relationship-and-sexuality-education>

provision has resulted in a wide variation in the quality and quantity of RSE provision.²² In particular, the recently published Thematic Evaluation of the Preventative Curriculum in schools and Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) Centres from the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) is clear that the flexible and non-statutory approach to the preventative curriculum has resulted in a situation where, *“too many schools/centres can avoid completely, or cover with insufficient depth and progression, many of the more sensitive aspects of the preventative curriculum.”*²³

There is an onus on the Northern Ireland Executive to prioritise this area of work given the inclusion of a commitment in the New Decade, New Approach (NDNA) document for the Executive to address, *“...the report of Sir John Gillen on the handling of serious sexual offences cases.”*²⁴ One of the key recommendations of the Gillen Review, is to effect cultural change in society using public awareness and school educational campaigns. It is vitally important that the development of a core RSE curriculum is prioritised so that all children and young people can access it, regardless of the school that they attend. We believe that all schools and EOTAS should have the needs and safety of the children at the core of their ethos.

The ethos of any school should always have the needs and safety of the children at the centre of it. This is the focus that RSE should take therefore children, and young people should be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills, and enabled to develop attitudes and values about relationships, healthy, unhealthy, and abusive, sexual identity, and intimacy.

Children’s rights

RSE needs to provide a platform for learners to develop the knowledge and skills to form, recognise and maintain a range of healthy relationships. A critical part of relationships and sexuality education is ensuring that all children and young people can recognise unhealthy relationships and abusive behaviour and seek support at the earliest opportunity. In order to contribute to making this a reality, children must be equipped to understand that under the UNCRC (Article 19) they have a right to safety, and therefore to be equipped with information and language to recognise all forms of abusive or controlling behaviour and know how to speak to a trusted adult if they are worried or concerned.²⁵

In the most recent Concluding Observations on the UK’s compliance with the UNCRC, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that governments across the UK *“integrate comprehensive, age-appropriate and evidence-based education on sexual and reproductive health into mandatory school curricula at all levels of education and into teacher training and ensure that it*

²² [The preventative curriculum in schools and Education Other Than at School \(EOTAS\) centres \(etini.gov.uk\); Publication - NIHRC Report: Relationships and Sexuality Education in Post Primary Schools in Northern Ireland: A Compelling Case for Reform | Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.](#)

²³ ETI (2023), page 27, see footnote 15 above.

²⁴ [New Decade, New Approach](#) at page 8

²⁵ [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - UNICEF UK](#)

includes education on sexual diversity, sexual and reproductive health rights, responsible sexual behaviour and violence prevention, without the possibility for faith-based schools or parents to opt out of such education.”²⁶

The RSE curriculum should address the child’s right to be safe, ensuring that all children and young people are taught to recognise abuse and know how and when to speak to a trusted adult about any worries or concerns

Engaging with parents/carers

Engaging with parents/carers on the curriculum is vital for developing a whole school approach, and for building good communication, transparency, confidence and trust in the teaching of RSE in schools. Relationships and sexuality education has a vital role to play in safeguarding children and young people and we believe high quality and inclusive education in schools is essential. A partnership approach to RSE between parents/carers and schools can help alleviate concerns, tackle misinformation about the RSE curriculum as well as provide parents and teachers with reciprocal support that will benefit the children and young people. Parents and carers should be aware of how RSE is to be taught in their child’s school and have the opportunities to raise concerns, ask questions and to be informed of the curriculum. Effective communication and transparency between schools and parents/carers is important in building and sustaining trust and confidence in the teaching of RSE. Schools may develop parental partnerships through, for example communicating with parents via newsletter, website links, online portals, or face-to-face parent events.

Government’s approach should be to emphasise the importance of parents in realising children’s rights, and of schools and parents/carers working in partnership to best meet children’s needs. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recently published a statement on Article 5 of the UNCRC to clarify the concepts of parental guidance and evolving capacities of the child, which may be to have regard to.²⁷ The Committee stated that parents’ responsibilities, rights and duties to guide their children is not absolute but restricted by a child’s status as a rights holders therefore guidance provided by parents must be exercised in a manner to respect and ensure children’s rights. The statement notes that children should receive appropriate direction and guidance by parents as well as direct protection from the State, in cases where parents fail to provide adequate protection of the rights of children.

The statement further notes that the State also has a responsibility to build the capacity of parents / guardians and community members to provide appropriate direction and guidance to children.

²⁶

tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2FC%2FGBR%2FCO%2F6-7&Lang=en, at paragraph 44(b)

²⁷ [Article 5 \(ohchr.org\)](http://Article5(ohchr.org))

Relevant NSPCC Campaigns and Services

The NSPCC is the leading children’s charity fighting to prevent child abuse in the UK and Channel Islands. We help children who have been abused to rebuild their lives, protect those at risk, and find the best ways of preventing abuse from ever happening.

To achieve our vision, we:

- Create, deliver and evaluate services for children which are innovative, distinctive, and demonstrate how to enhance child protection;
- Provide advice and support to ensure that every child is listened to;
- Campaign for changes to legislation, policy, and practice to ensure the best protection for children; and
- Inform and educate the public to change attitudes and behaviours.

Talk PANTS

Developed in consultation with children, parents, carers and teachers, [Talk PANTS](#) is here to help children understand their body belongs to them, and they should try to tell a safe adult they trust if anything makes them feel upset or worried.

P – Privates are private

A – Always remember your body belongs to you

N – No means no

T – Talk about secrets that upset you

S – Speak up, someone can help

Talk PANTS is here to help children understand that they have a right to say no and if they need to speak out about something, someone will listen. We know that a simple conversation can make a BIG difference, and that’s what Talk PANTS is all about.

Speak Out Stay Safe

[Speak out Stay safe](#) is a safeguarding programme for children aged 4-11 years old. It is available to all primary schools in Northern Ireland and across the UK.

The programme helps children understand:

- abuse in all its forms and how to recognise signs of abuse
- that abuse is never a child’s fault and that they have the right to be safe
- where to get help and the sources of help available to them, including the Childline service.

With the help of our mascot, Buddy the speech bubble, children learn that they have the right to speak out and be heard, be safe and get help when they need it. The programme is an effective way to support a school’s safeguarding duties and links directly to the curriculum as well as helping reinforce key messages about abuse and neglect as part of a schools teaching on relationships.

Talk Relationships

[Talk Relationships](#) is a service to ensure post-primary school-aged young people can learn about sex and relationships in a safe education environment that recognises, responds to, and prevents abuse. Each lesson builds knowledge, understanding and skills on how to negotiate relationships in healthy and safe ways.

Letting the Future In

Letting the Future In (LTFI) is designed to help children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse rebuild their lives. We support children and young people aged between 4-to 17 and their families so that they can recover from the impact abuse has had on their lives.

Conclusion

The NSPCC welcomes the opportunity to respond to this mini-inquiry. Our overarching objective is to ensure that babies, children and young people are protected from abuse and violence through early intervention and prevention, comprehensively tackling all forms of abuse and violence that children face.

We strive to ensure that there are adequate and effective recovery and support services in place for child victims of abuse and violence so that they have their needs comprehensively met and receive the individualised and specialist support they require to move forward with their lives and secure better lifetime opportunities.

If you would like further information on any of the details included within this briefing, please contact Caroline Cunningham, Acting Policy and Public Affairs Manager, at Caroline.Cunningham@nspcc.org.uk or Déarbhla Sloan, Senior Policy and Public Affairs Officer, at Dearbhla.Sloan@nspcc.org.uk.