

THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

EXHIBIT NKK / 1

Case study – Theme 6 (Child with disability)

Initially Groomed Online and exploited

1. Child A was a young Sikh girl who was 17 years old. She had mild learning difficulties and came from a very loving family.
2. She always struggled to make friends at school, she had one or two girls who would occasionally hang out with her, but you couldn't really call them good friends.
3. When she went to college, she tried her best to "fit in" but no-one really wanted to be her friend. She said she would often sit on her own and felt that the other students talked about her. This made her feel quite isolated.
4. In a desperate bid to feel accepted and connect with other people her own age, she decided to turn to the internet to make friends and chat to people. She went to a few social media websites such as snapchat and Instagram and soon started to make 'friends'.
5. Her parents did not think or know about the dangers of the internet, and were happy that she felt accepted and happier than she was before, so they did not put any safeguarding measures on the websites or monitor her usage.
6. As she had learning difficulties, she was quite open to disclosing information that she was asked and before long a few boys latched on to her vulnerability.
7. It wasn't long before there were 30/40 boys that were all messaging her and chatting to her. As they familiarised themselves with her, some of them slowly started to ask her to share partially clothed photographs of herself. Child A felt 'wanted' and she said that although she was a little hesitant at first she did send her photographs.
8. This progressed into them asking her to come and meet them, so they would send her a location in Birmingham and she would pretend that she was going to college and then catch a train to meet the boys. She said it was very rarely one boy and she soon discovered that the different boys who were messaging her on social media, knew each other.
9. Child A disclosed that sometimes she would get asked to meet at a hotel and other times she would be given a location in another part of the city.

10. She disclosed that when she met the boys, they would just 'chill' together, sometimes drink and they would make her perform sexual acts.
11. She shared a video of one of her meetings that was made by one of the boys and in the video it was evident that she was being coerced into doing things.
12. Child A disclosed that on one occasion, Boy B had asked to meet her at a hotel, but she had refused to meet him. She was then talked into meeting Boy C. She said when she arrived at the hotel there were two boys there and then Boy B also arrived at the hotel. She said that she was shocked as she did not know they all knew each other.
13. Child A also gave her phone to SWAN staff to look at and she was getting lots of messages from boys that it was evident from the messages that she did not know them, but it looked like her number was being passed between the different boys and they were all making contact out of the blue.
14. Child A's parents were the ones that sought help from SWAN for their daughter, when they went on her phone one day and saw the messages and photographs. It was good to see that her welfare and safety was their paramount concern.
15. SWAN spoke to Child A reassured her that we would get all the necessary support. The details of the case were shared with the MASH team in her home locality and the police were informed. Child A was also referred for Counselling.
16. SWAN staff were asked to continue supporting her for a number of sessions after the referrals were made.