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**CHILDREN GOING MISSING FROM HOME OR FROM CARE**

**RISK ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT**

**Vs 5 - Jan 2016**

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**RISK ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT**

**PART A**

## Introduction

The purpose of the assessment toolkit is threefold;

1. to enable professionals to assess a child or young person’s level of risk in a concise and consistent manner
2. to provide guidance on effective interventions to safeguard children
3. to improve professional understanding about the 'push' and 'pull' factors associated with young people going missing

This guidance is for anyone working with children and young people across the tiers of need. A child is defined as any child up to the age of 18.

The College of Policing definition of **Missing** is as follows:

*"Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered missing until located and their wellbeing or otherwise confirmed. Categories of risk will be 'no apparent risk, low, medium or high'."*

The police will categorise risk associated with missing as 'no apparent risk, low, medium or high.' This toolkit will allow professionals to assist with this risk assessment.

The Children's Society through its research identified the following risk factors that might precede a missing incident. These are often referred to as push factors (pushing the child out of the home).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Arguments and conflicts | Usually involving family or friends but might involve school staff. |
| 2 | Conflict within a placement | Exposure to domestic abuse or arguments between others within the home environment. This could relate to parents or siblings  |
| 3 | Poor Family Relationships | Limited opportunities/ abilities to resolve difficulties, manage tensions and interact positively within the family |
| 4 | Physical and/ or emotional abuse | Being ill-treated and harmed can lead to a number of challenging or distressing behaviours particularly if the young person isn't able to speak out about their abusive experiences.  |
| 5 | Boundary and control issues | A lack of parental control or being beyond parental control may contribute to risk taking behaviours, particularly during adolescence. |
| 6 | Step-parent issues | The introduction of a new parental relationship can trigger lots of mixed emotions which may need careful management |

## There are a number of factors which often 'pull' a child towards missing behaviour.

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| --- |
| Example of pull factors |
| The attraction of staying out with peers, boyfriends or girlfriends  |
| Running to be near friends or family – especially when a young person is in care and there are problems with contact arrangements   |
| The attraction of risky behaviours such as substance or alcohol misuse, offending and anti-social behaviour |
| Wanting freedom and independence  |
| Being made to feel special by grooming for potential sexual exploitation or child trafficking  |

## The immediate risks associated with going missing include:

* No means of support or legitimate income - leading to high risk activities
* Involvement in criminal activities
* Victim of abuse
* Victim of crime
* Victim of sexual exploitation
* Alcohol and/ or substance misuse
* Deterioration of physical and/ or mental health
* Missing out on schooling and education
* Increased vulnerability

The longer-term risks include:

* Longer-term alcohol/ drug dependency
* Crime
* Homelessness
* Disengagement from education
* Sexual exploitation
* Poor physical and/ or mental health

If you are concerned about exploitation please refer to the PSCB Exploitation Risk Assessment Toolkit.

In relation to unaccompanied asylum seeking children where there is a risk of trafficking the following factors may be considered:

**Push factors**

* Isolation (being in a foreign country, not speaking the language, not knowing who to trust)
* Young people not understanding their situation/how they are safe and not understanding they were/are victims of trafficking
* Scared of deportation (nearing 18/asylum decision)

**Pull factors**

* debt bondage
* threats of violence to them or their families
* voodoo/juju ceremonies
* Stockholm syndrome
1. **Why have we developed this Toolkit**

Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board has made the work to address missing a clear safeguarding priority for the city. A formal Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Committee has been established and an Operational Group is meeting monthly to gather intelligence about children who are at risk of sexual exploitation, going missing from home or from care, where they are going and who they are associating with - particularly at perpetrator level.

This toolkit seeks to provide:

1. A simple risk assessment tool so we can have a shared understanding about missing and to assist the police in grading the incidence as no concern, Low, Medium or High risk
2. Guidance for practitioners in identifying children at risk of going missing
3. Guidance and tools for practitioners to support children making different decisions and reducing the incidents of missing, particularly repeat missing episodes.
4. **Children missing from education**

Separate guidance exists on this. The local procedure can be found on the PSCB website: [Children Missing Education (CME)](http://www.portsmouthscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Children-Missing-Education-September-2016.pdf)

# Portsmouth Missing Child Risk Assessment

This Risk Assessment is an aid to action and for information sharing and recording.

**Aid to action:** As an action tool the purpose of the Risk Assessment is to inform single and multi-agency agency decision-making and planning to locate a ‘**missing**’ child. The Risk Assessment provides an indication of:

* The urgency of enquiries
* Areas of enquiry e.g. where drugs are available or that certain adults frequent, country of origin or country children are trafficked on to etc.
* Type of specialist knowledge that might be needed
* The supervision that may be required
* Agencies who may be first alerted e.g. local Accident & Emergency services

**Aid for information sharing and recording:** At the time that a child goes ‘***missing***’ the completed Risk Assessment should be shared with all agencies working with the child and kept on the child’s file in each agency. In cases where new information becomes available and/or the child remains missing for a protracted period, the risks should be re-assessed, shared with the agencies and kept on the child’s file in each agency. The most recently completed Risk Assessment should remain on the child’s file in all agencies working with the child.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of Child Missing |  |
| Date  |  |
| Address from which missing |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Factor** | **UASC****Y/N** | **Details and Explanation** |
| 10 years old or under |  |  |
| 11 to 14 years of age |  |  |
| 15 up to 18 years of age |  |  |
| **Factor** | **Details and Explanation** |
| Has a Child Protection Plan  |  |
| Needs essential medication or treatment not readily available to them e.g. asthma inhaler, insulin |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| May not have the physical ability to interact safely with others or in an unknown environment, e.g. visually impaired, history of abuse or inappropriate adult/stranger relationships, Downs Syndrome etc. |  |
| Lacks reasonable awareness of the risks associated with running away, incl. learning disabled |  |
| Been missing for over 24 hours |  |
| 3 times in 90 days missing occasion |  |
| Known to associate with adults or children who present a risk of harm e.g. Sexual Offenders, Offenders against children |  |
| Mental illness or psychological disorder that may increase risk of harm to themselves or others |  |
| Drugs and/or alcohol dependency |  |
| Suspicion of abduction |  |
| Suspected suicide or self-harm |  |
| Involved in violent and/or racial incident or confrontation immediately prior to disappearance |  |
| Concerns about state of mind e.g. unusual behaviour prior to disappearance or disappeared with no prior indication, or seemed troubled etc. |  |
| Inclement weather conditions where exposure would seriously increase risk to health |  |
| Family/relationship problems or recent history of family conflict/abuse |  |
| Employment problems |  |
| Financial problems  |  |
| Engaged (or is believed to have engaged in) criminal activities during their absence |  |
| School or college problems |  |
| On-going victim of bullying, harassment, or exploitation e.g. racial, sexual etc. |  |
| Previously disappeared and suffered or was exposed to harm whilst missing |  |
| Victim or potential victim, of forced marriage, FGM or trafficking, incl. for sexual exploitation  |  |
| Known to associate with gang members and other violent offenders |  |

**Missing Analysis Tool**

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| --- |
| **NAME OF YOUNG PERSON: DOB: DATE OF ANALYSIS:** |
| **YOUNG PERSON RISK TAKING BEHAVIOURS/INDICATORS** | **ASSOCIATES/ADDRESSES/HOTSPOTS** |
| **ALLEGED PERPETRATOR/S** | **POLICE ACTIVITY** |

|  |
| --- |
| **Summary of Risk**(Summarise the risks in a couple of sentences) |
| **Summary of Actions Taken**Include attempts to talk to child on mobile phone and attempts to contact friends & family |
| **Review Date for Actions Decided** |
| **Completed by, full name** | **Signature** |

**Part B**

1. **Guidance for practitioners in identifying children at risk of going missing**

Anyone working with children in a professional capacity should use their judgment to take whatever action is deemed necessary to protect and safeguard the child. This tool is designed to assist assessment and planning for vulnerable children. It does not *replace* existing assessment processes (SAF, Children’s Social Care assessments, YOT assessments etc.) it *enhances* these assessments, assisting professional judgement and your decision-making.

Our aim is to reduce the incidence of all children going missing. Children who go missing may place themselves and others at risk and each missing episode is potentially serious. The reasons for their absence are often varied and complex and cannot be viewed in isolation from their home circumstances or their experiences of care. Every “missing” episode should attract proper attention from the professionals involved, who must collaborate to ensure a consistent and coherent response is given to the child on their return.

When a child does go missing we want to be able to intervene in a timely way to prevent that child suffering harm and to recover the child to safety as soon as possible. We do this by partnership working, information sharing, problem solving and performance management. Interventions may be focused on the individual child, a child’s home, or by targeting ‘pull’ factors in the community. Interventions are important in attempting to address repeat missing episodes. Interventions must also be informed by effective return interviews. **The child’s view will be taken seriously.**

Interventions for looked after children must be driven by and reflected in the placement information record and in any care plan. The reporting of a child in care as a missing person should not be used as a sanction against the child by any practitioner or manager. The national minimum standards and regulations for children’s homes and fostering services require all providers to have in place procedures for when a child is missing from their care establishment. These procedures must be compatible with local protocols

The local authority will report a missing ‘looked after child’ to the police according to this protocol.

Hampshire Constabulary will also receive and record reports of a child missing from their parental home. It is expected that this will be carried out by either the parent or by the person who has parental responsibility for the child.

The local authority, police and other agencies will monitor compliance and outcomes jointly via the Strategic Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Committee.

1. **Process for a child who runs away or goes missing from home**

Children under the age of 16 years old are not legally considered as being able to live independently. For children over the age of 16 years old consideration should be given to their legal status, physical and emotional needs when making a judgment as to whether they can live independently.

* 1. **All agencies / members of the public**
		1. If it comes to the attention of any agency that a child is missing, they must advise the parent/carer to report this matter to the police. They also need to advise the parent of their agency’s duty to ensure that the matter is reported to the police and if necessary follow this up by contacting the police to verify that the child has been reported missing.
		2. The consent of a person with parental responsibility will be sought for a photograph to be used in any subsequent missing person investigation.
	2. **Responsibility of parents/carers**
		1. Parents and those with parental responsibility will be expected to undertake basic measures to try to locate their missing child. Anyone else who has care of a child without parental responsibility should take all reasonable steps to locate the child and ascertain their safety. Before a child is reported missing the following actions should be undertaken:
		+ Search bedroom/ accommodation/ outbuildings/vehicles
		+ Contact known friends and relatives
		+ Visit locations that the child is known to frequent
		1. Anyone who has care of a child without parental knowledge or agreement should do what is reasonable to safeguard and promote the child’s welfare. In these circumstances, they should inform the police, children’s services and the parents of their whereabouts and safety. If this is not complied with then the police should consider further action as prescribed in the Hampshire Constabulary harbouring guidance.
	3. **Role of the Police**
		1. The police will carry out enquiries aimed at locating the child as soon as possible.
		2. They will complete a (Police) risk assessment for each individual on every separate occasion they are reported missing. A risk level grading of either high or medium will be used.
		3. During the normal working week the police will notify the relevant local authority (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) of each child reported as missing within 24 hours. At other times this will be completed during the next available working day.
		4. Children who have gone missing may come to the attention of the police in other ways. When a child whom they believe is missing is then located and this has not been reported by their parents/carers then this should trigger further enquiries with other relevant agencies in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
		5. If enquiries identify risk factors at the home address then safeguarding procedures will be implemented. If the police decide not to return the child to their home address then options should be discussed with children's services to identify other suitable responsible adult(s) and/or accommodation.
	4. **Recording**
		1. A police RMS (record management system) report must be opened on all occasions when a child is reported missing to the police. The RMS will remain open until the child has been located. A CYP report will be completed and sent to the MASH.
	5. **Sharing information**
		1. The MASH will consider what each key agency (Health, Education, Social Care and Police) know about the missing child and their family so as to determine an appropriate safeguarding response, which will include the identification of a lead professional to carry out a formal risk assessment.
	6. **Review of continued absence**
		1. Throughout the missing episode, the police are responsible for the investigation and grading the risk.
		2. In the event of a continuing missing episode, then good communication and close cooperation is essential to ensure that any significant concerns are identified and appropriate safeguarding action is taken.
		3. When a child has been absent for a period of 24 hours, the police should then update the local authority daily of any significant developments.
		4. The police, in consultation with the child parents, will be responsible for any media strategy to locate a child missing from home.
		5. Where a missing child has not been located within 7 days, a strategy meeting will be convened under S47 CA 1989 and a multi-agency plan of action will be developed. An example of a missing related protection and disruption plan can be seen at Appendix 7.
		6. Where a child has been missing 3 times in 90 days the MASH will share this information amongst the partners and agree with the police a strategy proportionate to the information known about the incidents leading to the contact, this will include consideration for a formal response under S47 CA 1989.
	7. **Return of the child**
		1. It is the responsibility of the parent or carer to contact the police and confirm that the missing child has returned. Young people who run away or go missing from home or care
		2. If the whereabouts are known or suspected, it is the responsibility of the parent or carer to arrange for the child’s return. In exceptional circumstances, in the interests of the safe and speedy return of the child, the police may agree to assist.
		3. **Police ‘safe and well’ check** - Once the child has been located, the police will carry out a safe and well check. It will not be conducted over the telephone. Its purpose is to check for any indications that the child has suffered harm; where and with whom they have been; and to give them an opportunity to disclose any offending by, or against, them. This is not a return interview which is described below. The police will notify the relevant local authority of the return of the child and any relevant risk information via the established PPN Notification system.
		4. If it is apparent that they have been the victim of a crime or that they have been at risk from any person then the police will instigate further enquiries. This is vital for the protection of the child and for the speedy recovery of evidence.
		5. Additionally, in matters of sexual exploitation, or in any other situation which indicates that the child may have been subject to, or put at risk of, significant harm, a referral must be made to the MASH in accordance with local safeguarding procedures.
		6. The Local Authority is responsible for deciding whether a return interview is conducted for each missing episode. The return interview will be used to consider ongoing risks to the child/young person and the appropriate way to manage this. A simple grading system of high, medium or low will be used and thresholds for this can be found at Appendix 4. Completed return interview forms should be sent electronically to the police.
		7. If a child is graded as high risk at the return interview a strategy meeting should be convened under S47 Children Act 1989 and consideration given to a child protection conference.
1. **Process for a looked after child**
	1. **Pre–placement and admission to the placement**
		1. Foster carers and residential providers will be given a copy of this toolkit which must be followed when a child goes missing. They should be provided with training, supervision and support in the use of this policy and develop skills to enable them to divert children from going missing.
		2. Each child in care has a care plan based on a full assessment of the child’s current and future needs, including potential risk to self or others. The care plan will therefore take into account any risk that the child may go missing and any factors which may increase the risk to the child should they go missing.
		3. Children’s residential and fostering service staff should also contribute to this assessment and it will detail the level of supervision that is needed for the child. All risk information should be included in the placement plan and the child’s care plan. As part of this assessment it will be appropriate for the relevant local authority to consult with the police to share information.
		4. Should a child go missing, the carers or member of residential staff should complete a risk assessment - see Portsmouth Missing Child Risk Assessment Record. A recent photograph of the child should be made available. Most commonly the photograph will be used by local police officers to help them recognise the child when patrolling or when actively looking for the child at relevant locations. In serious cases the police and the local authority may decide to use the photograph more widely and even involve publishing the photograph to national or local media.
		5. In respect of children in care, a recent photograph bearing a good likeness to the child will be kept on record by the local authority. When a child is admitted to care the consent of a person with parental responsibility will be sought for a photograph to be used in any subsequent missing person investigation. If possible the agreement of the child should also be gained.
		6. The relevant local authority will ensure that sufficient knowledge and information about the child is recorded in the placement plan to enable carers to complete the risk assessment.
		7. The residential unit manager/foster carer should consider the most appropriate ways to meet the above requirements and whether it is necessary and appropriate to discuss ‘running away’ with the child.
	2. **When a looked after child goes missing**
		1. If a child is missing from care then the local authority complete the risk assessment and report the incident to the police.
		2. In deciding the level of risk, all staff must consider the circumstances of the child and their missing behaviour. This will include detailed consideration of:
		* The circumstances of them going missing
		* The child’s care plan
		* The age of the child
		* The maturity of the child
		* Any physical or cognitive disability of the child
		* Any continuing or urgent need for the child to have medication or other medical treatment
		* The legal status of the child
		* Previous behaviour and history of the child
		* Danger posed by the child to themselves or others go missing from home or care
		* General vulnerability of the child
		* The child’s tendency to drug/substance abuse
		* Whether the child is perceived as running to, or running from, someone or something
		* Any circumstances within the placement, say with carers or other residents that may be relevant to the absence
		* The risk of offending
		* The influence of peer groups, families or friends
		* Predatory influences on the child. These may relate to others wanting to use the child for crime, sex or drugs
		* Any known risk of abduction
		* Environmental factors including weather, time of year, community events or tensions
		1. Children who are missing from their placement can be a matter of considerable concern to their carers and there is a need to locate them and ensure they are safe. The children can be thought of as being on a continuum, with there being little cause for concern at one end, and with significant cause for concern at the other. Children who are a few minutes late home from school would not normally give rise to concerns; they may have missed the bus, or they may be exhibiting normal adolescent testing out, to establish the boundaries of acceptable behaviour, or to show their disagreement with aspects of their placement.
		2. It is not helpful to consider every momentary absence as warranting a formal missing person report. However, at some point, depending upon the child and the circumstances, the child being missing will give rise to justifiable concern and require a formal missing person report to the police. Whilst there can be no substitute for a considered judgement, based on a sound assessment of the child and the circumstances, it is the purpose of this framework to assist carers to structure their thinking with regard to the level of risk. This decision should not be taken in isolation, residential staff should consult with the senior member on duty and foster carers should liaise with the child’s social worker or EDT staff. The situation should be kept under constant review and changes in circumstances taken into account. If the child is receiving support from CAMHS professionals, Educational Psychologists and so on, it may be advisable to discuss the case with them. However, if they are not readily available a decision must be made on the basis of the best available information.
		3. Each case must be decided on merit and a formal missing person report to the police may be actioned earlier in some circumstances than in others. Indeed for a small number of young people it may be appropriate to immediately report them as a missing person. Normally this will be as part of the care plan, because of the child’s vulnerability.
		4. The fact that the child may have gone missing on a number of previous occasions does not reduce the risk. In fact, children who repeatedly go missing are often being enticed away from their placement by activities that they see as exciting or by predatory influences. Furthermore, short missing periods may be as risky as lengthy ones.
	3. **Reporting a child as missing**
		1. Reporting a child missing involves providing detailed information to the police by completing a missing child risk assessment. It is important that the carer makes it clear to the police that they are reporting the child as missing. The carer should always ask for, and record the police reference number.
		2. When receiving a missing person report the police will tailor their response to the circumstances. If information is available to suggest a possible location of the missing child, and this gives rise to concerns about the safety of the child, the police response will be to immediately address those concerns.
		3. Premises search: For a child missing from a child's home or foster placement (not a residential children's home), a premises search will be undertaken by police officers. For a child reported missing from a residential home, the police will ask the senior care manager responsible for the unit to verify that a thorough premises search has been conducted by care staff.
		4. Ultimately, the decision about the risk level attributed to the case lies with the police. In making this decision, dialogue between carers and police is paramount**.**
		5. The carer will provide sufficient information about risk factors. After considering this and other information the police will decide the risk level to be assigned to the case. This will be high, medium or low or no apparent risk. Hampshire Constabulary has decided that no case involving a child under 16 years will be classified as low risk.
		6. Carers must also inform without delay:
		* The parents/those who have parental responsibility (unless indicated otherwise on the care plan)
		* The Social Worker or their team manager
		* The emergency duty team, if out of hours, and the Social Worker and accountable team manager the next working day
	4. **Recording a missing period**
		1. Carers should record all missing reports carefully. This will include:
* Date
* Time
* Risk assessment
* Circumstances
* Agreed category of risk
* Police incident number
* Any actions being taken to locate or determine their whereabouts
* Date and time and location when found
* Who they were returned by
* Follow-up actions
	1. **Roles and responsibilities**
		1. After reporting a child missing, children’s services remain responsible for the child in their care. This responsibility is not absolved when the child has been reported missing to the police.
		2. Carers and the child’s social worker will be responsible for liaising with the police, taking an active interest in the investigation and passing on all information which may help to inform the investigation and assist in protecting the child while missing.
		3. Carers and the child’s social worker should continue to make appropriate enquiries with other residents, or by telephone with all persons who may be able to assist with the whereabouts of the missing child unless they are requested not to do so by the police. This will include trying to make direct contact with the child. Carers may visit known places to locate the child if appropriate. Residential care staff may take steps to follow a child out of the unit where it is safe to do so.
		4. On occasions, a family member, friend or another young person resident may approach a staff member and give information that indicates a young person is in an exploitative situation. This should be recorded and passed on to the individual’s social worker, and where appropriate the police. All information gleaned from these enquiries should be passed to the police.
		5. Once a child is reported missing to the police they will then have primacy in respect of the investigation to trace the child.
		6. The police will normally conduct all physical enquiries away from the premises from which the child is missing.
		7. In certain circumstances the police may need to revisit the duties initially performed by care staff. When necessary they will do so in liaison with appropriate children’s services staff and will do so sensitively, causing as little disruption as possible to the establishment and residents.
		8. Throughout the process the police, residential carers and social workers must keep a full record of all actions taken and messages received and given.
		9. Media Strategy: In some cases, particularly where a missing child is felt to be especially vulnerable or where they have been missing for a long period of time, it may be necessary to publicise the case via the media. Such an approach is not routine, but is usually a response to very serious concerns for the child’s safety. Either carers or the police may suggest such an approach. Normally, such decisions to publicise will be jointly made, and where appropriate, in consultation with parents and children’s services. The police may also utilise the website facility of the ‘missing person bureau’ ([www.missingkids.co.uk](http://www.missingkids.co.uk/)) to publicise the absence of the child or young who run away or go missing from home
	2. **Review of continued missing period**
		1. When a child has been missing for a period of 48 hours the social worker should inform the relevant senior manager. A strategy meeting (under S47 Children Act) should be convened to ensure all relevant information is shared to develop media strategy as appropriate and complete a protection and disruption plan.
		2. Throughout the missing episode, carers and the police will continually review the case. A further strategy meeting should be convened if child has not been located within 7 days. Strategy meeting will involve police officers, carers, the child’s social worker, and any other professional involved in the care of the child. The meeting will review:
		+ What action needs to be taken by the Police and other professionals?
		+ Decide whether the child should return to that placement when located
		+ Consider any other relevant information
		+ Further such reviews will take place as necessary
		1. Three episodes of missing within a 90 day period should trigger a multi-agency strategy meeting under S47 Children Act 1989 so as to share information and complete a protection and disruption plan and consider a child protection conference.
	3. **Return of the child**
		1. If the whereabouts are known or suspected, it will be the responsibility of the local authority to arrange for the child’s return between the hours of 0900 hrs to 2100 hrs / 7 days a week. The police will not be used unless the circumstances in 6.7.3 apply.
		2. From 2100 hrs to 0900 hrs / 7 days a week the child’s return will be completed by either the local authority or the police dependent upon the known risk and the resources available at the time.
		3. However, there will be circumstances when, in the interests of the safe return of the child, the police may agree to requests from the local authority to assist. The police should not unreasonably withhold assistance in cases involving the recovery and transportation of vulnerable children. However the police will not agree to requests to provide escorts for missing children which would unreasonably involve officers leaving their normal area of patrol.
		4. It is the responsibility of the carer to contact the police by telephone and to confirm that the missing child has returned. The police will verify the child’s safe return in person and complete a safe and well check.
		5. If it is apparent, upon the return of a child, that they have been engaged in criminal behavior or been the victim of a crime whilst missing, or that they may be in danger or at risk from any person arising out of circumstances that had occurred whilst they were missing then the police must be called and asked to attend without delay. This is vital for the protection of the child and for the speedy recovery of evidence.
		6. In such circumstances, the missing persons clothing, mobile phone and trace evidence from their body, fingernails or hair may be crucial. In cases of sexual abuse the child should be discouraged from washing and immediate advice sought from the police. If carers become aware of the location of the scene of any crime committed against the child, or of the location of any crucial evidence they must notify the police without delay. This will enable the police to take steps to secure and preserve evidence.
		7. In sexual abuse cases the police have access to specially trained officers, doctors and facilities designed to care for the victim and obtain evidence.
		8. Additionally, in matters of sexual exploitation, or any other situation which indicates that the child may have been subject to, or at risk of, significant harm, refer to the relevant LSCB policy guidance and procedure ‘guidance on child sexual exploitation’.

**It should be noted that if any one agency or professional has increased or serious concerns for a child’s well-being or safety then they may call a multi-agency strategy meeting at any time, regardless of the number of missing episodes.**

* + 1. When a child returns to the placement it is the responsibility of the carers to notify any person of the missing episode under para 6.4.
1. **Return interviews: safety, assessment and information gathering**
	1. ‘Return Interviews’ is the term applied to the safety, needs and risk assessment carried out by the statutory children services department and/or their partners. It should include an exploration of the reason the child left their home or placement as well as what risks they were exposed to whilst missing. The ‘return interview’ is different from a police ‘safe and well’ check and is not an Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) interview.
	2. The return interview is important in safeguarding the child for the future. It must not be viewed as a routine or administrative task.
	3. The local authority is responsible for deciding whether a return interview is conducted for each missing episode.
	4. Return Interviews should be offered for every instance of missing where a child has:
		* Been missing for over 24 hours;
		* Been missing on three or more occasions;
		* Engaged (or is believed to have engaged) in criminal activities during their absence;
		* Known mental health issues;

For a child in care a return interview should always be conducted. Appropriate safeguarding procedures should be followed where there are safeguarding concerns for example:

* + - Where the child has been hurt or harmed whilst they have been missing (or this is believed to have been the case)
		- Where there is known or suspected risk of exploitation or contact with persons posing a risk to children.
	1. It is acknowledged that a returning child may well share different parts of their experience with different people. It is the responsibility of all agencies therefore, to attend to issues of immediate safety, future support, safeguarding needs and information-sharing.
	2. It is the responsibility of each children's services team manager to ensure that the return interview is carried out to a suitable standard by a person approved to do so. Central Government guidance suggests that ideally this is conducted by an independent person who is trained to carry out these interviews and is also able to follow up any actions that emerge.
	3. The child’s view on who should be conducting the return interview should also be considered.
	4. When it is not practicable for a return interview to be conducted by the most suitable person, or an independent person, it is better that an interview is conducted by a nominated care professional than no interview being conducted at all. This is very relevant for residential care staff - who may be best available to conduct this for a child who is repeatedly going missing. This will be considered as part of the planning process for the child.
	5. The return interview should be conducted in all instances within 72 hours of the child’s return, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
	6. The purpose of the interview is:
		+ To better understand the reasons why the child went missing
		+ To explore the circumstances leading to the missing episode
		+ To inform future prevention strategies
		+ To inform any future missing person investigation should that child go missing again
		+ To learn of the activities, associates, risks and victimisation involved in the missing episode, and where possible to address those risks with appropriate and proactive strategies
		+ To identify and address any harm the child has suffered – including harm that may not have already been disclosed as part of the safe and well check.
		+ To consider ongoing risks and the appropriate ways to manage this. A simple grading system - high, medium or low will be used and thresholds for this can be found in Appendix 4.
	7. The interview will be recorded and all return interviews must be signed off by a children services team manager after presentation by the relevant professional. A strategy meeting under S47 Children Act 1989 should be convened for all children graded at high risk.
	8. A copy of the return interview should be sent to the lead manager within children’s services and the police. The police ‘missing person coordinator’ will ensure that details from the return interview are added to their own RMS records. The signed copy should be kept and stored in accordance with the local authority's administrative procedures and not sent to the police.
	9. In some circumstances the child may make extremely sensitive disclosures that need particularly careful management that should be recorded separately, but referred to on the return interview form. In such circumstances it may be appropriate for the interviewer to discuss the information with relevant professionals.
	10. Where a return interview leads to a disclosure that needs specific action, for example, to safeguard the child or investigate a crime the matter should be referred to the local authority and the police.
	11. For looked after children it remains the responsibility of the relevant social worker to ensure completion of the return interview. There is an additional responsibility on the child’s placement to monitor that they are conducted within the agreed timescales. In the event that the return interview is not conducted within 72 hours, then the placement should alert the relevant senior manager in children's services. A return interview should be completed as soon thereafter.
1. **Police powers**
	1. The Police have significant powers to safeguard vulnerable children. These include powers to enter premises, to recover children and to take them into police protection.
	2. When a missing child is found or known to have been in company with an adult during any missing episode, in circumstances which afford reasonable grounds to suspect that an offence has been committed by that adult (i.e. child abduction, sexual offence, drug offence, assault), then the incident will be taken seriously throughout the process of reporting, investigation and provision of follow up care. The main priority will be the safety and well-being of the child; thereafter, the police will take positive action against any perpetrators, hold them accountable for their actions and prefer charges where appropriate.
	3. It is recognised that children who have been the victim of a serious offence may not always see themselves as a victim or be willing to assist in any investigation, particularly in the early stages. Likewise those whom others have used for criminal purposes may not be willing to assist the police. A complaint from a victim is not required to make an arrest. Usually reasonable suspicion is enough to arrest. When such an offence has occurred and a power of arrest exists, the offender should normally be arrested.
	4. Without prejudice to the welfare of any child, the local authority will support the police in taking appropriate action against those who commit crimes against children and/or involve children in their offending behaviour.
2. **Response to escalating concerns**
	1. In response to escalating concerns formal strategy meetings must take place in the event of repeat episodes of children going missing. For these meetings to work, and thereby improve our collective responses, appropriate attendance and clarity of purpose is essential. The meetings should be held within a week of any trigger episode. It is the responsibility of children services to arrange that meeting.
	2. The scheduling of strategy meetings will be initiated by the local authority and will be determined by missing episodes.

**N.B.** In cases of a child going missing from an out-of-authority placement then the responsible authority arranges the meeting involving the relevant organisations from the host authority, to determine action and to ensure change. When a child who has a history of going missing is moved to an out-of-authority placement, the host authority should be informed of the risk and as part of the placement agreement, appropriate details should be shared to support the local authority to manage the risks to inform care planning for that child.

* 1. The trigger for holding a missing from care/home strategy meeting under S47 Children Act 1989 **will be missing for more than 24 hours, three episodes in a 90 day period** or children considered high risk following return interview. This is a crucial stage in avoiding a serious escalation and must, therefore, be given a highpriority by all concerned. Representatives from each organisation or interested party must be present. Themeeting should be chaired by a children's services manager, attendees should include:
		+ **Child\***
		+ Social Worker or relevant lead professional
		+ Police representative
		+ Parent and or carer, residential worker or foster carer
		+ Fostering Social Worker
		+ Person who conducted return interview if different to above
		+ Other relevant professionals/voluntary agency (For example Health, Education, Youth Offending Teams)

\* Discussion should take place between the chair and the child’s social worker or relevant lead professional about whether it is appropriate for them to attend.

* 1. This meeting should try to identify any ‘push’ or ‘pull’ factor in the case and any other voluntary or statutory agency, which has an interest, or may take an interest, in the missing child’s welfare and circumstances. In the case of ‘pull’ factors it may be necessary to target those in the community who harbour the missing child or exploit them with regard to crime, sex or drugs. The meeting should be minuted and **MUST** produce a clear action plan, including timescales for action, named lead professionals, risk/contingency planning and regular review dates. The notes of the meeting should be copied to all invited professionals. In addition, copies should be sent to the child’s allocated Independent review officer - where the child is looked after.
	2. The volume of missing episodes is not the only reason initiate a strategy meeting or to escalate the level of intervention. The following are examples of other reasons to initiate or escalate interventions:
		+ Any case where the risks involved in even a single future-missing episode are very high
		+ Cases where it has been identified that immediate action is necessary to ensure the wellbeing of the child
	3. It should be noted that if any one agency or professional has increased or serious concerns for a child’s well-being or safety then they may call a multi-agency meeting at any time, regardless of the number of missing episodes.
	4. When it is believed that an adult is adversely involved with a child going missing the local authority will invoke safeguarding procedures and the police will consider using enforcement tactics such as the harbouring and/or abduction legislation.
	5. Alternatively the local authority and/or parents may decide to institute civil proceedings to obtain an injunction preventing any particular adult having any contact with a named child.
1. **Missing vulnerable families**
	1. The loss of professional contact with a child, (including an unborn child), young person or family who are perceived to be “at risk” must always be regarded as a matter of concern
	2. Once the loss of contact is established then agencies should be proactive in making efforts to locate the person/family concerned. All actions must be recorded.
	3. Initiatives taken at a local level are often more productive in locating people and good communication/links with other agencies should be established.
	4. The agency identifying the missing child/family/person should inform their relevant line manager.
	5. Measures should be taken to trace the person informally through family, friends, neighbours, etc. as is considered reasonable and appropriate.
	6. Enquiries should be made through other local agencies involved with the child or family.
	7. The person should be reported as missing to the police as soon as it is felt appropriate to do so. The police will take a lead role in investigating the matter.
	8. Refer to child services if appropriate. Consideration must be given to convening a strategy meeting with other agencies to coordinate efforts.
	9. Consideration should be given by child services to circulate the details to other local authorities if all other avenues have proved unsuccessful.
	10. In the event of a family being “missing” for a period of 7 days then a formal review should be undertaken by a strategic manager in safeguarding and the operational head of the relevant children services authority should be informed.
2. **Suspicious adults/vehicles**
	1. Staff/carers who observe suspicious adults or suspicious vehicles should not approach either if there are concerns for their safety. Record information that is observable, (in the case of vehicles, make, colour and / or the number plate is useful). Staff should not place themselves or others at risk.
	2. All relevant information should be passed to the police for further checks to be made, and all information should be forwarded for discussion.
	3. From a report by the Association of Chief Police Officers “There is clear evidence that those who exploit children are mindful of official processes and will seek to circumvent them. This must be considered when dealing with missing. It is common for offenders to time their abuse to coincide with the normal rhythms of a young person’s life.”
	4. Good recording of times and dates when a child / young person has been missing may assist in discerning if there is a pattern to the individual not being where they should be. The timescales may be weeks rather than days.

**Appendix 1** - **Definitions**

**Child:** A child or young person under the age of eighteen years with the exception of a former relevant child within the meaning of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000; these young people continue to be the responsibility of the Local Authority up to the age of 21 (24yrs if in receipt of full time education).

**Missing person:** Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered missing until located and their wellbeing or otherwise confirmed. Categories of risk will be 'no apparent risk, low, medium or high'.

**Child in care:** A child who Is looked after by the Local Authority e.g. they are ‘in care’ by reason of a court order, if they are provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours with the agreement of their parents or with the child if they are aged 16 or more.

**Sexual exploitation**: Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.

**Criminal exploitation**: There is currently no legal definition of criminal exploitation. However in the Home Office publication *Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults: County Lines Guidance* (July 2017) it is described as ‘criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines activity. It is a harm which is relatively little known about or recognised by those best placed to spot its potential victims. It can be best understood as ‘involving exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person/s receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them completing a task on behalf of another individual or group of individuals; this is often of a criminal nature. Child criminal exploitation often occurs without the child’s immediate recognition, with the child believing that they are in control of the situation. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young persons limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability’.

**Unaccompanied asylum seekers (UASC) and trafficking**: The UK Borders Agency refers unaccompanied children to the relevant local authority when they assess that a child may be vulnerable or at risk from harm e.g. trafficking. The local authority, along with other partners, will look at the needs of the child as part of its duty to safeguard all children in its care.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/330787/Care_of_unaccompanied_and_trafficked_children.pdf>

**Children not receiving a suitable education**: This was previously known as ‘Children missing from education and there was some confusion in relation to the use of term ‘missing’. Children not receiving a suitable education are defined as children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll and who are not receiving a suitable education by any other recognised means. When a child fails to attend school, this may be for a variety of reasons and may indicate that the child is at risk of harm. The education authority should make reasonable enquiries to ascertain the circumstances before reporting them as missing to the police. Details of these enquiries are contained in guidance for local authorities on children not receiving a suitable education, which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/395138/Children_missing_education_Statutory_guidance_for_local_authorities.pdf>

**Strategy meeting**: This meeting will be for all relevant safeguarding practitioners to discuss the push and pull factors as to why a child repeatedly goes missing, to agree a multi-agency intervention plan to reduce the risks to the child and to reduce the number of repeated missing person episodes. **N.B**. For the purposes of these protocols a missing child will be defined as one where the missing episode has been reported to the Police.

**Appendix 2 - Missing from home procedure flow chart**

Child's whereabouts unknown: Parents/carers should search premises and try to contact child/friends/relatives

Missing?

NO
(Child is out without permission and
not believed to be
at risk

YES

Notify police - including all details and known risks to the missing child and all steps taken to locate the missing child

Inform support agencies as appropriate

Parent to reconsider whether child should be reported missing if he/she doesn't return

Police complete missing person report and risk assessment

Police investigation to find child

CHILD RETURNS

CHILD RETURNS/

is located and RETURNED

Open case

CYP completed and sent to MASH for multi-agency risk assessment or pass to locality team

Missing for X days or
missing 3/90

Police safe and well check/social worker visit/return interview

Strategy meeting under S47 Child Act 1989

Return interview completed to determine push and pull factors and establish ongoing risk or review risk

**Appendix 3 - Missing from care Procedure Flowchart**

Planning ahead - Assessment of need

Review at every Statutory Review

Child's whereabouts unknown: Carers should search premises and try to contact child/friends/relatives

Carers complete Missing Child Risk Assessment

Missing?

YES

NO
(Child is out without permission and
not believed to be
at risk

Carers inform police immediately if high
risk: Missing Child
Risk Assessment

If appropriate, inform child's Social Worker/EDT/
senior member of residential staff

Carers inform
child's Social Worker/EDT/senior member of
residential staff

Inform those with parental responsibility

Strategy meeting if
child is missing more than 24 hours

Monitor and review risk assessment. If absence is more than 48 hours initiate missing procedure

CHILD RETURNS

Notify others

Welcome back, show concern, obtain information

Missing for 7 days

CHILD RETURNS

7 Day Strategy meeting

Welcome back, show concern, obtain information challenge behaviour

Notify all relevant parties

Fortnightly meetings

Missing after 7 days

Missing for 3 months

Police safe and well check/social worker visit/return interview and establish ongoing risk/review risk

Fortnightly meetings
Chaired by
Head of Service

**Appendix 4: THRESHOLDS AND APPROPRIATE INTERVENTIONS**

**Low Risk**

**Child or Young Person reported absent/ missing for the first time**

This child or young person requires intervention by any professional, parent or carer who has a good relationship with them to carry out healthy relationships and rights work. Depending on the indicators they present with, they will also require some basic awareness raising work on risk taking behaviours and consequences. If there is a person/s posing a risk to them, ensure they are disrupted and information about them recorded and passed to the appropriate persons.

If a young person has a learning disability, they should not be considered low risk.

**Procedure**

* Ensure that this child or young person is listed on file as 'At low risk of Missing'.
* Carry out basic intervention work as noted above.
* Complete SAF and TAC process
* The child or young person should be assessed for changes to risk status regularly using this toolkit until the child or young person is safe or the risk is removed.
* If risk is escalating report to Safeguarding lead within your service and follow procedures below for Medium or High Risk cases**.**

**Medium Risk**

**Child or young person missing on more than one occasion and is engaging in risk taking behaviours during missing episodes. Child or young person is likely to go missing again.**

This child or young person requires more intensive assessment and 1-1 support. Work may also be required with the family and peers.

Launch a SAF process and inform the MASH of the Medium Risk of Missing. Consider with the MASH whether a referral to Children’s Social Care should be made.

Involve all professionals linked to the young person in the resulting TAC/TAF. If the child or young person is already open to Children's Social Care, assessments are to be updated and if required, a S47 enquiry undertaken.

**Procedure**

* Inform your agency's Safeguarding lead
* Inform the MASH of the Medium Risk and the launch of the SAF and consider with the MASH a referral to Children’s Social Care
* Strategy meetings under Safeguarding Procedures where appropriate.
* Collate information on any perpetrators, hotspots and associations involved with the young person and inform Police.
* Regular TAC or other network meetings until child/young person is protected or desists from risk taking behaviours.
* Consider whether CSE toolkit should be completed

**High Risk**

**Child or young person missing 3 times in 90 days or at continued risk of missing episodes or significant risk taking behaviours during missing episode**

Referral to the MASH who will initiate S47 enquiry. A statutory Single assessment should be completed and coordinated intensive support of child/young person and family.

**Procedure**

As above and;

* Take whatever steps are required to protect the child or young person, i.e. Emergency Protection Order, Police Protection Order or staying with a family member in another city.
* Contact into MASH as a High Risk and seek immediate referral to Children’s Social Care.
* Strategy meeting called by Social Worker
* Section 47 Joint Investigation Enquiry initiated. A review meeting should be convened every 6 weeks.
* Regular review under Child Protection or Children in Need until child is protected from abuse.
* Complete CSE toolkit as necessary

**Ensure that any disclosures are recorded and dated. Professionals who do not have Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) training should not discuss disclosures, but call in Social Care and the Police to interview. This is to ensure that any future prosecutions are not hampered or prejudiced by questioning.**

When young people have suffered abuse they often want to focus on practical things rather than the abuse. This is long term work, with no quick fixes and the intensive work should be carried out alongside positive activities to build self-esteem. The engagement of the young person is crucial to achieving the best outcome.

The effectiveness of current interventions should be assessed to determine whether they are sufficient to;

* Protect the young person from being exposed to any further risk
* Prevent the sexual exploitation
* Prevent the young person from going missing
* Change risk taking behaviour.

| **Appendix 5: Intervention Strategies**This table identifies some effective strategies for working with vulnerable children, young people and their families |
| --- |
| **Aim** | **Intervention Options** |
| Promote positive relationships with family, friends and carers. | * Carers/parents should be actively engaged in searching for the young person to show that they care.
* Promote positive relationships with family and friends.
* Promote the need for carers/parents to show attention.
* Encourage honesty. Reinforce the nature of the crime.
* Involve parents/young person in tackling the problem and in TAC/TAF or safeguarding Meetings.
* Identify suitable long-term key workers who can befriend the young person.
 |
| Physically protect the young person. | * It is permissible to physically intervene to prevent a young person running from care as an emergency intervention.
* However, physical intervention does not offer a long-term risk management strategy and if the only way to prevent the young person repeatedly running away is by physically restraining the young person on a regular basis, an alternative or reciprocal placement should be considered.
* Consider removing and preserving clothing and passing it to the Police if it will aid the Police in an investigation
* Police and Social Care Protection Powers to be used as appropriate.
 |
| Maintain contact whilst absent. | * Ring the young person’s mobile phone.
* There must be 24/7 contact available so that the young person does not feel isolated during evenings or at weekends.
* Ensure the number of the Missing People Helpline and ChildLine is in the young person’s mobile phone address book or text the numbers to them.
* Compassion banking - send text messages to the young person. Consider using ‘text language’ that the young person relates to, tell them you are worried and care about their safety and encourage them to contact you or another adult.
* Consider informing appropriate outreach workers, Safer Neighbourhood Team Bulletins, border alerts (UKBA/UKHTC) and agencies in other cities such as Social Care, Police and specialist services.
* If whereabouts are unknown consider publicity and posters; their design should be young person centred.
* After 7 days young people must be referred to the Missing Person’s Task Group.
 |
| Enhance the return procedure to ensure it is a positive experience. | * Identify an individual that the young person respects and wants to talk to. This person should conduct the return interview on every occasion wherever possible. This will ensure consistency and facilitate a positive relationship between the young person and the interviewer.
* Interviews by Police Officers that are no more than an admonishment of the young person should be avoided, as these may exacerbate the situation. Threats to prosecute for wasting Police time or threats to take out an ASBO are rarely effective at engaging young people who regularly go missing, and are unlikely to positively change their behaviour.
* Independent interviews should be arranged and would preferably be conducted by Staff who have received specialist training and have a good relationship with the young person.
* Return interviews should be followed up by active support of the young person to ensure the return interview is seen as a positive experience.
* Where child or young person is involved in petty offending consider Restorative Justice Solutions as the offending could be symptomatic of abuse; particularly recognised in young males.
 |
| Set clear boundaries to acceptable behaviour and motivate positive behaviour. | * Consult the young person and agree rewards and penalties.
* Consider reward schemes i.e. monetary/ vouchers.
* Be flexible.
* Adopt a behaviour management strategy.
* Give the young person more independence in response to responsible behaviour.
 |
| Empower the parent/ carer/ foster carer. | * Raise the awareness of parent, carers and foster carers of relevant policies, procedures, their responsibilities, duties, legal powers, their options and restrictions upon them.
* Consider family support services.
* Maintain active support of parents, carers and foster carers.
* Raise the awareness of parents and carers to help them to identify the signs of child sexual exploitation and encourage use of the information report forms.
* Consider Parenting Orders.
* Provide training in self-protection.
 |
| Build the young person’s self-esteem. | * Identify and encourage positive activities that the young person may engage in and encourage the young person to make positive contributions at home, school, leisure or work; positive activities should build self-esteem, not just entertain.
* Assist the young person to look at the consequences of their behaviour.
* Take time to explain the issues and keep the young person informed.
* Involve the young person in looking at alternatives and decision making.
 |
| Raise the young person’s awareness of the dangers. | * Work with schools to raise awareness of risk.
* Develop or identify internet sites aimed at young people to raise their awareness of the dangers of going missing. They must be young person focussed, accessible and user friendly to ensure that young people will be attracted to them and motivated to use them i.e. ‘Ask Frank’ and 'Think U Know' websites.
* Arrange inputs by professionals to groups or individuals explaining the dangers.
* Organise individual or group discussions with adults that the young person respects.
* Facilitate peer mentoring (buddies) by young people who have been through similar experiences and learnt how to cope and protect themselves from exploitation.
* Arrange personal safety training for the young person and family.
 |
| Consider the health needs of the young person. | * Sexual health and contraceptive advice.
* Medical treatment if suffering neglect, injury or poor health.
* Therapeutic Interventions.
 |
| Involve the young person in diversionary activities. | * Enable the young person to participate in exciting positive activities and leisure activities such as drama or dance.
* Activity weekends or team building exercises through multi agency provision.
* Arrange work experience opportunities or vocational training.
* Use all agencies involved such as YOT, Police, Voluntary Sector and Social Care.
 |
| Make home a more attractive place to live. | * Identify push/pull factors and deal with them.
* Tackle relationship problems.
* Address domestic violence issues.
* Tackle drug/ alcohol problems of other family members.
* Consider an alternative placement that gives the young person a feeling of more independence and responsibility.
* Consider a placement that has continuity of staff and extra support for evening shifts.
* Consider extended stay with a family member in a different city to break the cycle.
* Consider specialist placement options.
 |
| Achieve normality. | * Enforce bed times.
* Enforce waking times.
* Promote attendance at school.
* Encourage young people to eat together at meal times.
 |
| Make school a more attractive place to go. | * Tackle bullying, truancy and peer pressure.
* Provide ‘Personal, Social and Health Education’.
* Encourage engagement with alternative and educational provision.
* Provide funding for after school activities.
 |
| Provide specialist support through other agencies. | * Sexual, Drug and Alcohol Counselling and other Services.
* Therapeutic Services.
* Advocacy Services.
* Mentoring Services.
* Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
* Involve Education services.
* Raise awareness of “drop in” support groups.
* Refer to Voluntary Sector for support.
* Positive activities.
* Consider Barnardo’s 4 A’s Model (Access, Advocacy, Assertive outreach and Affection).
* Provide self-referral systems so that young people can refer themselves.
* Provide parent-referral systems that deal with parent’s concerns that their young people will be taken into care if they report abuse.
 |
| Plan on positive change and set small targets to achieve monthly  | * Targets need to be agreed with young person and parents.
 |
|  Where a young person is refusing or reluctant to engage, and is involved in soliciting or grooming peers, ensure all engagement and disruption activities detailed above have been considered. | * Where the police are considering criminal action against children and the final decision rests with the police, they should consult with partner agencies through the CSE meetings to ensure that all alternatives and appropriate actions have been considered for that child, in line with ACPO guidance in relation to not criminalising young people where possible.
 |

**Appendix 6: Police sharing of non-urgent information by partner agencies form**

CPI 1



**Information Source:**

Where did this information come from (name/DoB/address)?

Can they be re-contacted? What are their contact details?

How did they find this information out?

When did they find this information out?

Who else have you shared this information with?

**Community Partnership Information**

*Guidance:* This form is for the sharing of non-urgent information by partner agencies that relates to the **Missing**, **Exploited** and **Trafficked** agenda and related issues, such as **Modern** **Slavery**. This information may be sanitised and used in subsequent partnership forums for the purposes of identifying and mitigating risk. Completed forms should be sent electronically to 24/7-Intel@hampshire.pnn.police.uk. Any questions or concerns regarding this form can be raised with your police contact, or to FIB. The form is not a referral form, nor does it replace any pre-existing referral or notification mechanism.

**Information (including date & location):**

**Your name:**

**Your organisation:**

**Your telephone number:**

**Your email address:**

**Appendix 7: Example of a Missing related protection and disruption plan**

**Name of person completing plan: Role:**

**Date of Meeting: Time:**

|  |
| --- |
| **Name of child/young person: XXXXXX DOB: XXXXXX** **Address: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX** |
| **Decision:**  | **Low Risk:** | **Medium Risk:** | **High Risk:** X | **Exploited:** |

| **Desired Outcome:** | **Action: Recommendations** | **Who by, state name and role:**  | **When:** | **To be** **reviewed at:** | **Progress at review:** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Section 47 joint investigation** | Police and Social Care to complete a strategy discussion, joint home visit and progress investigationChild protection medical to be completed Liaise with other Police and Social Care Services in Nottingham and Birmingham to complete checks on all addresses and names providedServe Abduction Orders where necessary | Social Care Manager / PoliceSocial Care/ YPSocial worker/ PolicePolice | ImmediateASAPASAPOngoing | CiN ReviewNetwork meeting & CiN reviewNetwork meeting & ReviewCiN Review |  |
| **2. Reduce the risk of missing episodes** | Provide 1-1 advice on risks associated with missing episodesConsider a tracker on the young person's phonePlace and Alert on Police MISPER system – highlight known addresses and vulnerability of child and who to contact in emergency etc.Improve attendance at school/collegeDo not hang around in hotspots discussed today or go to other City's with peers or adults without parental permissionParents to implement a strict curfew (appropriate to the age of the child) and follow the 15 minute rule. If the child is not home or where they should be ring or text them after 15 minutes. If they do not respond or phone switched off wait a further 15 minutes and ring the Police to report missing. | Barnardo’s WorkerParentsPoliceYP/SchoolYoung Person/ ParentsParents/Young Person | 4 wk. prog starting next weekImmediateImmediateImmediateOngoing Immediate | Network meeting & CiN ReviewAs aboveAs aboveAs above As aboveCSE Review |  |
| **3. Support the emotional** **needs of the child/YP and family** | Referrals for support to CAMHS/Counselling etc.Offer bereavement counselling to family and childSupport YP with self-harming | Social Worker/ YP CAMHSCAMHS | ImmediateImmediateImmediate | CSE strat meetingCiN ReviewCiN Review |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **4. Provide diversionary** **activities to improve self-esteem and** **replace excitement** | Positive activities to be offered, particularly those that heighten adrenaline | Network Group | Ongoing | CSE Strategy Meeting |  |
| **5. Ensure all relevant** **people are aware of the level of risk to the young Person** | Complete a current risk assessment and share with relevant professionals | Network Group | Immediate | Network meetings |  |

**Remember that this plan is a working document and should be updated at every network meeting.**

**SIGNED: DATE:**

**Appendix 8: Missing return interview/assessment**

|  |
| --- |
| **Discuss sharing of information and confidentiality**Please inform young person that a copy of the assessment may be shared with other professionals and ask them to state if they wish for anything to remain confidential.**Permission to Share given : Y/N** |
| Date of PPN: |
| Person completing the return interview: | Date complete: |
| Lead Professional: |
| **Young Person’s Details** |
| Name:  | CCM: |
| Telephone Number : | DOB/age:  |
| **Missing Episode Details** |
| Who reported the young person missing?  |  |
| Where did they go missing from?  |  |
| Where was the YP found? |  |
| Have you spoken to the adult with PR? |  |
| Were any issues highlighted/why do they think the YP went missing? |
| PPN reference (s): | Time left: | Time returned: | How long where they missing?  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| What was their presentation upon return? |
| Was a Police Safe & Well check completed? Y/NWhat does the Safe & Well check tell us? |
| Did the young person go missing with anyone? Details: |
| **Discussion with Young Person** |
| Who reported you missing? |
| How long were you missing for?If you stayed out all night where did you sleep? |

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| Where did you go missing from? Where did you go? How did you get there? |
| What did you do? |
| Who were you with/who did you meet? Did you feel safe with them? |
| Why did you not tell anyone that you were leaving/ or that you did not plan to return home? |
| What were you thinking and feeling at the time?  |
| What needs to happen to make you feel safer/ more stable at home/school? |
| Who do you think has been affected during your missing episode? How and why? |
| **Push Factors of going missing** | Tick |
| Witnessing/experiencing domestic violence: |  |
| Experiencing Physical abuse, Sexual abuse, Emotional abuse: |  |
| Cultural conflicts: |  |
| Problems with peers (bullying) |  |
| Substance misuse by parents/carers/child |  |
| Learning disabilities, special needs or mental health issues (Low self-esteem, Anger management difficulties, Social isolation) |  |
| Homophobia |  |
| Breakdown in relationships with caring adults |  |
| Death, loss or illness of a significant person in the child’s life |  |
| Financial/employment difficulties |  |
| Needing space – not able to have own time or space at home. Bored or isolated and having a lack of activities or opportunity. |  |
| Lack of love and security |  |
| Family history of prostitution |  |
| Trafficking Factors - Isolation (being in a foreign country, not speaking the language, not knowing who to trust),Young people not understanding their situation/how they are safe and not understanding they were/are victims of trafficking or Scared of deportation (nearing 18/asylum decision). |  |
| History of crime or association with offenders or adults/ children that pose a risk of harm (parents or child). |  |
| History of disrupted schooling/ poor attendance/ exclusions |  |
| Regular medical needs/ treatment on going or Health/Sexual health problems |  |
| Self-harm/ mental health difficulties |  |
| Engaged/ exposed to criminal activities, gang members and/or other violent offenders |  |
| Previous/current missing episodes |  |
| Other, please specify |  |
| Analysis of Information: |
| **Pull Factors of going missing** |
| Running to see family, feeling like they are missing out on things/ wanting to choose rather than be told when they can have contact.  |  |
| Running to be near friends – friends aren’t approved of/ classed as unsuitable. If in care – wanting to see friends when you choose not when told you can. |  |
| Running to be with Boyfriend/Girlfriend – partner not approved of seen as unsuitable |  |
| Spent time with family  |  |
| Went to see friends to have fun, go to town, shops, park to drink take drugs and hang out |  |
| Went to boyfriend or girlfriend’s house |  |
| Went somewhere unfamiliar with boyfriend or girlfriend. |  |
| Went somewhere unfamiliar with friend/s. |  |
| Walked around town or parks alone |  |
| Trafficking - debt bondage, threats of violence to them or their families, voodoo/juju ceremonies, Stockholm syndrome |  |
| Other, please specify |  |
| Analysis of Information: |
| **High Risk Categories** |
| Missing Overnight/24 hours: | Y/N | For missing periods of over 24 hours inform the Deputy Director |
| Repeat missing episode | Y/N |  |
| Domestic Violence/Partner abuse | Y/N |  |
| Involved in Criminal behaviour | Y/N |  |
| Harmed or Injured whilst missing | Y/N |  |
| Emotional Wellbeing Concerns | Y/N |  |
| Alcohol/Substance Misuse during missing period | Y/N |  |
| Trafficking | Y/N |  |
| High Risk areas/places visited identified | Y/N |  |
| High Risk peer/adult associates identified | Y/N |  |
| What is your assessment of identified areas of support:What is the safety plan?What needs to be addressed with the caring adult? |
| What is your assessment of the risk for this young person going missing again? (If high risk a strategy meeting should convened under S47 Children Act 1989)High Medium Low |
| Is a strategy meeting required?  | Y/N | Would the Young Person like an Independent Visitor? | Y/N |
| Are there indicators of CSE:  | Y/N | Risk assessment/Screening tool completeddate: |
| Are there indicators of CCE:  | Y/N | Risk assessment/Screening tool completeddate: |
| NRM referral Required: | Y/N | Allocated Barnardos Worker: |
| **Locations of concern:** |
| **Other YP's we have concern for following discussion (does this need sharing with MASH?):** |
| **People of concern:** |
| CPI Complete: | Y/N | Does the Op MET need updating? | Y/N |

**Appendix 9: Useful Contacts**

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| **Telephone Numbers** |
| MASH | 0845 671 0271023 9268 8793  |
| Police | 999 or 101 |
| Police Central Referral Unit | 01329 316113 |
| Barnardo's Miss-U | 01489 796684 |
| NSPCC Child Protection Helpline | 0808 800 5000 |
| ChildLine | 0800 1111 |
| NHS Direct/ 111 Service | 0845 46 47 / 111 |
| Barnardo's Trafficking Service | 07957 320336 |

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| **Email Addresses** |
| Police Intelligence | eastern.intelligence@hampshire.pnn.police.uk |
| MASH | cafenq@portsmouthcc.gcsx.gov.uk |
| Community Partnership Information (CPI 1) | 24/7-Intel@hampshire.pnn.police.uk |

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| **Websites** |
| Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board | [www.portsmouthscb.org.uk](file:///%5C%5Csvp-file05.ad.portsmouth.gov.uk%5Chome%24%5C305eopr%5CF.%20PROJECTS%202013%5C0.%20Archived%20projects%5C9.%20CSE%20Op%20Group%5Cwww.portsmouthscb.org.uk) |
| 4LSCB Procedures | [www.4lscb.proceduresonline.com/](file:///%5C%5Csvp-file05.ad.portsmouth.gov.uk%5Chome%24%5C305eopr%5CF.%20PROJECTS%202013%5C0.%20Archived%20projects%5C9.%20CSE%20Op%20Group%5Cwww.4lscb.proceduresonline.com%5C) |
| Barnardo's | [www.barnardos.org.uk](file:///%5C%5Csvp-file05.ad.portsmouth.gov.uk%5Chome%24%5C305eopr%5CF.%20PROJECTS%202013%5C0.%20Archived%20projects%5C9.%20CSE%20Op%20Group%5Cwww.barnardos.org.uk) |
| CEOP  | [www.ceop.co.uk](http://www.ceop.co.uk) |
| National Working Group on CSE | [www.nwgnetwork.org](file:///%5C%5Csvp-file05.ad.portsmouth.gov.uk%5Chome%24%5C305eopr%5CF.%20PROJECTS%202013%5C0.%20Archived%20projects%5C9.%20CSE%20Op%20Group%5Cwww.nwgnetwork.org) |
| UKHTC | [www.ukhtc.co.uk](http://www.ukhtc.co.uk) |
| UKBA  | [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk) |
| Department for Education | [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk) |