

Missing from Home or Care

One Page Briefing for Social Workers and Lead Professionals

Children who go missing from home or care place themselves and, at times, others at risk. They are also at increased risk of being harmed. Children run away from conflict, problems at home or school, neglect, abuse or because they are being groomed by individuals who seek to exploit them. Many run away on numerous occasions. The reasons why children go missing from home or care are complex and frequently involve a number of 'push' and 'pull' factors, which should not be viewed in isolation from the child's experiences in daily life.

A child will be defined as missing if their whereabouts are unknown and

- The circumstances are out of character or
- The context suggests the child may be
 - I. The subject of a crime or
 - II. At risk of harm themselves

Children placed in Sandwell who are reported as missing

A missing child compact notification will be received by the Local Authority via the CSE GCSX email inbox from West Midlands Police. This will be recorded using case note type 'Missing Child' on the Liquid Logic case recording system and the information work flowed to the allocated worker and manager. You must ensure that you record a missing child action plan for every missing episode. You should refer to the Guidance for children missing from home or care on Tri X for full details of what is expected.

When the child is found, you will receive a case note notification titled missing child found notification. Barnardos will then undertake the return home interview. Once the return home interview is completed you will receive a copy which will be work flowed via LCS or EHM if the case is open to targeted services. What information will the return home interview give me?

- Reasons why the child went missing
- The child's wishes and feelings
- Health concerns such as substance misuse or sexual activity
- Push and Pull factors
- Any Actions needed

Children placed out of borough

Please note for a child placed out of borough a missing notification is not received via the CSE GCSX email. If you have a child placed out of borough you must ensure you are aware of the procedures that you must follow. If you are not then please speak to your Team Manager.

Questions to ask yourself:

1. Do you use the information from the missing, found and return interviews to inform your ongoing plan? If not, why not?
2. Have you read the Children Missing from Home and Care Guidance on Tri X?
3. Do you know what Push and Pull factors are? Consider how they can inform your plan.
4. On your case load, do you have children that have been reported missing if so are you confident that you have an effective safeguarding plan in place?
5. Have you included the needs and interventions required in your plan for the child e.g. CIN, CP, LAC or TAF?
6. Have you recorded all missing episodes in the child's chronology?

If the answer is no to any of the above questions, please refer to the following and don't be afraid to ask:

- Your Team Manager or a member of staff from the CSE team
- Tri X / [West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures](#)
- Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board [Website](#)