



## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 0615135  
Date            24 June 2015

### *Children Missing from Care*

#### **Request:**

Over the past 5 years, how many children have gone missing from care? Can this be broken down by year and by the age of the children who have gone missing?

#### **Response:**

In response to your request, the table below shows the numbers of children missing from care each year, broken down by age, as submitted as part of our national statutory returns. The data is based on financial year (April – March) and reflects the number of children that have had one or more missing episodes during the year.

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

Age	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
0	0	0	0	0	0
1	0	1	0	0	0
2	0	1	0	0	0
3	0	0	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	0	0
6	0	0	0	0	0
7	0	0	0	0	0
8	0	0	0	0	0
9	0	0	0	0	0
10	0	0	0	0	1
11	0	0	0	0	0
12	0	0	0	3	0
13	0	1	0	1	2
14	0	1	0	3	3
15	0	2	1	9	10
16	2	5	1	8	8
17	1	2	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>

We have also provided you with a link and relevant policy and procedure on Children Missing in Care, see below:

## Children & Young People

### Missing & Return – 72 hour return interviews

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this Policy is to outline the responsibilities of Children & Young People's Services when children and young people in the City go missing to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

This Policy must be read in conjunction with the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board Missing Policy:

[http://wolverhamptonscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_prot\\_ch\\_spec\\_circ.html#missing](http://wolverhamptonscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_prot_ch_spec_circ.html#missing)

## Policy

Approved by – Cross Service Meeting (Children & Young People Service/Safeguarding Service) (7<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

Published – May 2015

Review – May 2017

<b>REVIEW LOG</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Approved by</b>
April/May 2015	1.0	New Policy Produced.	Cross Service Meeting – 7 <sup>th</sup> May 2015
This system of recording review dates is designed to ensure staff at all times use the correct version of the up to date Policy. This system is used on all Wolverhampton City Council – Children, Young People and Families Policies and Procedures.			

<b>CONSULTATION</b>
<p>The following people have been consulted on this policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Service Director – Children &amp; Young People</li> <li>- Head of Service – Safeguarding/5-18 Early Help/Looked After Children</li> <li>- Senior Youth Worker</li> <li>- Cross Service Meeting Attendees</li> </ul>

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Policy is to outline the responsibilities of Children & Young People's Services when children and young people in the City go missing to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

## 2.0 PRINCIPLES OF THIS POLICY

The following principles will apply to this Policy:

- All return interviews will be conducted by an impartial individual within 72 hours of the child/young person returning
- In conjunction with the return interview the allocated worker will also undertake the initial CSE screening

## 3.0 PROCESS

When a child goes missing the Safeguarding Service will be notified on their return in the following way (see flowchart appendix A):

1. A COMPACT notification (for a child that has returned from a missing episode) by email will be made to the Safeguarding Service. (COMPACT is a record of information obtained by the Police during initial missing reports, the found report and safe and well check)
2. The Safeguarding Service, in a timely manner, will:

Check to see if the child/young person is known to Social Care via CareFirst.

The following will then apply:

<b>Where the child/young person is known to Social Care:</b>	<b>Where the child/young person is not known to Social Care:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Email a copy of the COMPACT to the Missing Coordinator via <a href="mailto:missing@wolverhampton.gov.uk">missing@wolverhampton.gov.uk</a></li><li>- Copy this to the allocated Social Worker for information.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Email a copy of the COMPACT to the Missing Coordinator via <a href="mailto:missing@wolverhampton.gov.uk">missing@wolverhampton.gov.uk</a></li></ul>

### 3. Missing return interviews

The Missing Coordinator will check ONE and YOIS/UMIS to see if the young person is known to Early Help/Youth Offending Team (YOT). Where they are known the COMPACT will be emailed to notify them that the child has returned.

The Missing Coordinator will email a copy of the COMPACT to the relevant 5-18 Early Help Locality Manager (based on the child/young person's home/care address) requesting that a 72 hour return interview is undertaken. The Missing Coordinator will record the notification on the Capita ONE database, where/ who it has been sent to for follow up and the date.

Where the child/young person is LAC and placed in a distant placement (20 miles and over) see Section 3.1.

#### **4. Return Interview to be conducted**

The identified worker will undertake the 72 hour return visit (within 72 hours of return).

#### **5. Return Interview Form completed**

A fully completed return interview form (appendix b) will be sent **electronically** to the Missing Coordinator via [missing@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:missing@wolverhampton.gov.uk). The Missing Coordinator will record this on the Capita ONE database and upload the return interview document. This will then be sent to the allocated worker (where already known/open to us e.g. YOT/Social Care) who will save this in the document hub on the relevant database (e.g. Carefirst/ YOIS/ UMIS) against the child/young person's file.

#### **6. Completed Interview Forms sent to the Police**

The Missing Coordinator will send all completed interview forms to the police via secure email within 72 hours of the missing return. This will then be recorded on ONE (Missing Data Sheet).

### **3.1 PROCESS FOR LAC PLACED IN DISTANT OUT OF CITY PLACEMENTS (20 miles and over)**

Where a looked after child is placed in an Out of City Placement the possibility of undertaking a return interview (incase a missing episode occurs) will be negotiated at the point of placement with the provider by the Placement Team.

The expectation is that the missing coordinator will request the provider to undertake the return interview and then send the paperwork back via secure email as per steps 4-6 above.

### **4.0 REPORTING INFORMATION**

The Missing Coordinator will be responsible for providing reports to Sexually Exploited Missing and Trafficked Group (SEMT).

This will include an analysis of any themes or trends.

### **5.0 CHILDREN SEXUALLY EXPLOITED (CSE) SCREENING**

All return interviews will be initially screened for CSE (where not already open to Social Care).

When the missing interview is completed the relevant worker will also use the risk indicators checklist (appendix 1 in the WSCB Final CSE Strategy) to inform whether the young person is at risk of CSE.

This will be recorded on ONE (in the UDF) that this risk assessment checklist has been used and the outcome of this will be:

- (1) no further action (because they are not at risk)
- (2) screening tool completed (see appendix 2 in WSCB Final CSE Strategy)

When the screening tool is completed this is always submitted to WSCB (as outlined in the CSE Strategy) so that Safeguarding can decide whether a MASE meeting is required.

## **6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **6.1 Safeguarding Service**

- In a timely manner send forward all received compacts onto the missing coordinator

### **6.2 Missing Coordinator**

- Record all COMPACTS received on the Missing Database
- Ensure all return interviews are passed onto the relevant Early Help Locality Manager so an allocated worker can undertake within 72 hours
- Proactively chase return interview paperwork if not sent back to the Missing inbox within the timescales indicated
- Ensure return interview information is sent to the police within 96 hours of the missing return
- Provide 'missing' data to SEMT
- Analyse data for any patterns/trends

### **6.3 Worker identified to undertake the return interview**

- Undertake Missing interview within timescale
- Fully complete missing return interview documentation and CSE Risk Indicator checklist (where appropriate)
- If 3 appointments are missed to undertake the return interview this should be discussed with the Locality manager or relevant Consultant Social Worker/YOT Manager where the child/young person is known and the outcome notified to the Missing Coordinator.
- Send a copy of the Missing Interview documentation to the Missing Coordinator

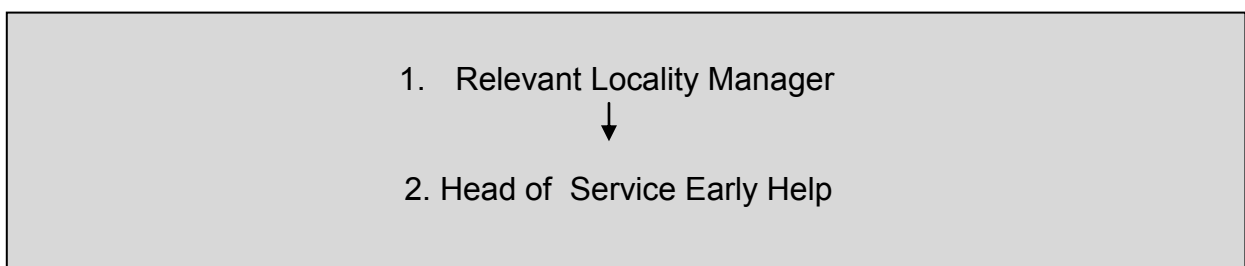
## **7.0 VENUES FOR RETURN INTERVIEWS**

If the young person is of school age or college arrange to see them in school/college.

If this is not appropriate or possible a home visit needs to be arranged and conducted without parents unless young person wants them present. If a home visit is not appropriate a venue such as an early help locality site would be an alternative.

## **8.0 DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

At any point in the process if there is a dispute when missing return interviews are not completed then it should be raised in accordance with the structure below:





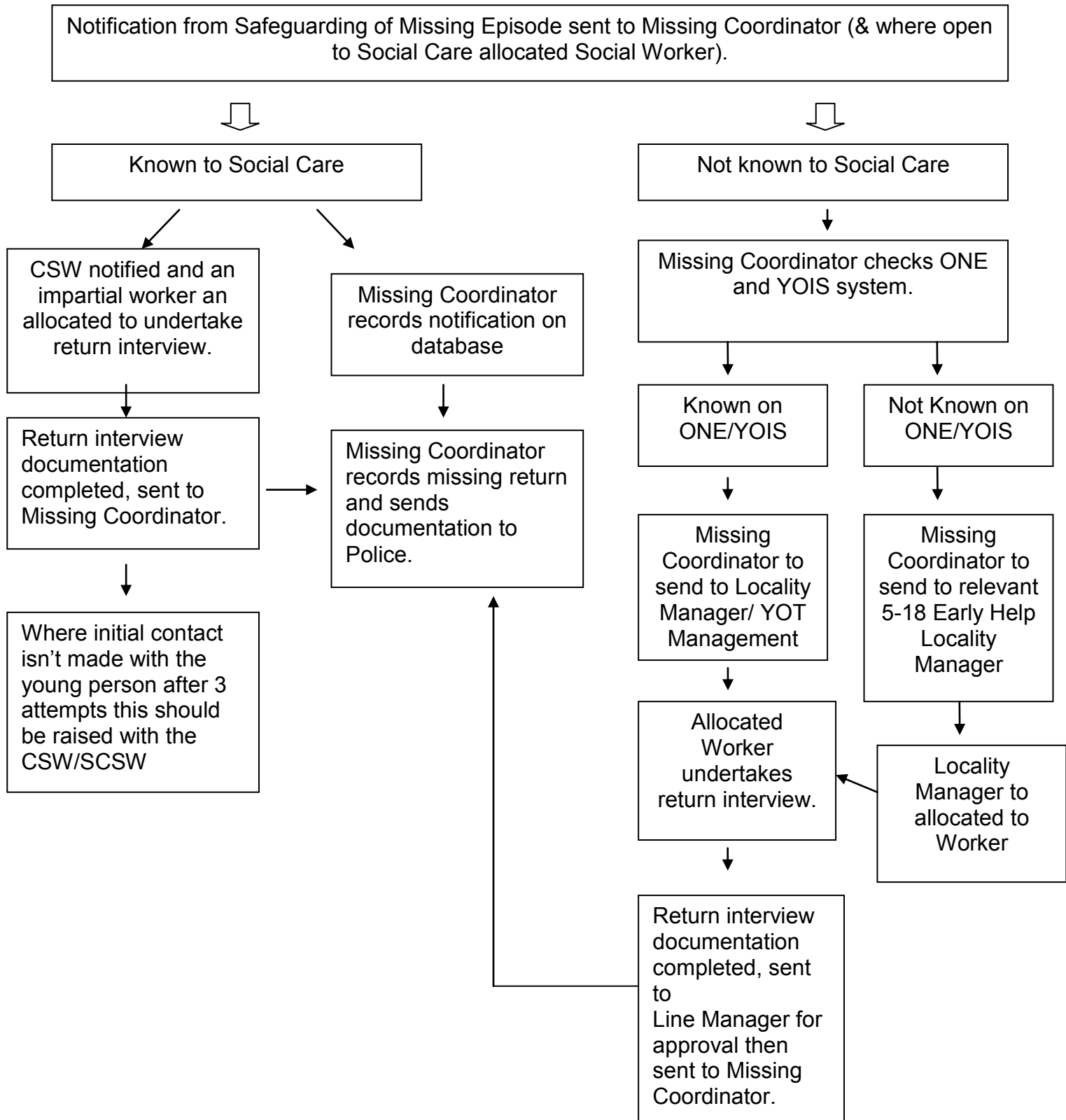
## **9.0 INTERVIEW OUTCOMES**

Where concerns or issues are evident from the interview the worker will make an informed decision as to whether an assessment/support/intervention is required and follow the necessary policies and procedures.

Managers need to be confident that any unmet needs and or highlighted concerns are followed up in line with existing policies.

## Appendix A

### Missing Flowchart



## Appendix B

# Missing episode return Interview

Date of interview..... Place of  
interview.....

Young Person Name .....Date of birth.....  
Age.....

Address

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Mobile number..... Home  
number.....

e-mail.....

School..... Year..... Year tutor.....

Date reported missing.....Date returned.....No: of episodes.....

Missing from: **HOME/CARE** (please delete)

**Assessments** (please tick/delete)

Child In Need <i>current/historic</i>		Targeted Intervention (YOT, HYWT, CAMHS)	
Child Protection <i>Current/historic</i>		Assessments EHA /DUST/CSE	

### Agencies and people involved

Agency	Lead Professional	Contact number

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**Office Use only.**

Action	Referral for MASE	MARF Multi agency referral form	EHA	YOUTH WORKER	NFA
Date Completed					

**Date of Electronic input to Document Hub (please delete):**

**One/CareFirst**

**Confidentiality Statement**

I understand that the information given and written below may be passed on to other services that will be able to help and support me further.

Reason for missing episode

Risks taken (health, safe from harm, illegal activity)

Further Information (lifestyle, emotional, self- esteem, peer group)

Signature of Young Person .....

Signature of Professional.....

Date .....

Date .....

