



Title/Status-	Missing Return Allocation Process & Standards
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Leicestershire Procedure for Missing Return Allocation Process & Standards

Applies to- Children in Particular Circumstances



Missing Return Allocation Process and Standards

The completion of return interviews for children who have been reported missing are a statutory responsibility of Children and Family Services. The interview should be carried out within 72 hours and should be in-depth and where possible undertaken by a neutral person, but there are exceptions to this as described below. The purpose of this document is to explain the process of allocating return interviews and the associated standards and guidance.

The full statutory guidance can be found [here](#)

1. All missing episodes for children are reviewed by the Child Exploitation Team upon receipt of confirmation from Leicestershire Police. The review is undertaken by a Team Manager or Senior Practitioner who will triage the information provided by the Police alongside what information is held on Mosaic and will then allocate to the appropriate Team/Worker to undertake the required return interview with the child. The decision-making and allocation process is in Appendix 1 of this document.
2. Missing return interviews will be allocated directly into Mosaic, and you will be notified of the allocation. Return interviews should always take priority to ensure that timely information about the missing episode is gained.
3. Where a child has been missing 3 or more times within a 90-day period or the missing period is longer than 72 hours, a strategy discussion is required. Where there is an allocated worker and the Line Manager is a registered Social Worker, this will be undertaken by that Manager. In all other circumstances, this will be convened by the CE Team or First Response Childrens Duty.
4. Once allocated, contact should be made to arrange a face-to-face interview. A telephone return interview should only be offered as a last resort and should have management oversight to agree this, explaining the attempts made to facilitate a face-to face interview in line with the standard described in point 4.
5. Engagement standard- There needs to be a minimum of 3 calls/ 3 texts at different times of the day and all contacts / phone calls that you make case noted on Mosaic (this can be a summary for the day). The purpose of this is to arrange a face-to-face return interview at a time and place suitable for the child.
6. It is important that the care status of the child is understood. Where children are in the care of the Local Authority, please contact their carer/care provider/ social worker and NOT their parents. For the Safer Returns Project, if the child or young person has an allocated worker, then contact to be made with the worker and case noted on Mosaic (the allocated worker will make any contact with parents where needed).
7. Nil returns are only recorded as such when you are unable to speak to



anyone regarding the missing episode. If you gather information regarding the missing episode from a parent, carer or allocated worker but are unable to speak to the child, then this is NOT a NIL-RETURN and will just be recorded as “Unable to gather child’s voice”.

8. There may be circumstances where the child or young person is willing to engage in the return interview but for varying personal circumstances cannot meet to do this within the 72-hour window. The return interview is still offered, booked in at the soonest time and the reason for not meeting the 72-hour timeframe is case noted on Mosaic.
9. Complete the missing return interview with as much detail as possible. Ensure that the document is written to the child and that the child/young person is offered a copy of their return interview should they want one.
10. If there are any concerns about child exploitation, then the Child Exploitation Toolkit needs to be completed or updated. This is to be undertaken by the allocated worker or Safer Returns Project if there is no allocated worker. Commentary around this needs to be recorded in section 2 and section 7 of the return interview.
11. All sections of the Return Interview need to be completed fully before this workflow is countersigned by a Manager who will confirm that the document is of good quality and will agree any next steps. It is imperative that information around missing periods and return interviews are built into any assessments or interventions with a child and family and work is evidenced on how the plan will keep a child safe.
12. There should be a full account of all the work undertaken as part of the return interview on Mosaic. These should be written to the child.
13. The final step to complete the return interview after management oversight has been applied and the return interview is deemed as good quality, is that a copy of the return interview is sent to the following two email addresses flagging if there are any immediate concerns for the CE Team:
 - Missingreturninterviews@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk
 - Cfs.cse.team@leics.gov.uk

Monitoring and Oversight

14. The CE team provide additional oversight to return interviews where concerns are flagged by the worker completing the return interview. This could be in the form of additional Police oversight or instigating safeguarding procedures such as convening a strategy discussion etc.
 - 14.2. A weekly update of the timeliness of return interviews is provided to Senior



Management Team in relation to the 72-hour standard. Access to data is available to Teams across the Department and is integrated into Improvement Cycle Meetings.

Escalation

15. The above additional oversight will review compliance with Strategy discussions and missing returns and alert the Service Manager of CE Service of any anomalies. Improvement Cycle Meetings across CSC will ensure robust oversight of data in relation to Missing return interview and Strategy discussion compliance.

Visio Flow Diagram *Appendix One*



