



**WOKINGHAM**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Guidance on the Management of Care  
Leavers who are 'Not in Touch' and Missing

UNCLASSIFIED

## Document Control Information

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# Guidance on the Management of Care Leavers who are 'Not in Touch' and Missing

Wokingham Borough Council has a duty to provide support, guidance, and an allocated Personal Advisor to 'former relevant' care leavers aged between 18-25 years. This includes supporting and offering advice in respect of the holistic needs of those leaving care and maintaining regular direct contact.

There are care leavers that do not always maintain regular contact with the service and the council has a duty to reach out and encourage an ongoing relationship.

When a care leaver has expressed clearly that they do not want a service, this should be confirmed to them in writing, letting them know that they can request support and their entitlements in the future and relevant time frames around this.

**Management Oversight should be recorded, scrutinising any plan to cease to initiate contact and indicating if this response is supported.**

There are care leavers that go missing as opposed to not maintaining contact. Examples include former-UASC care leavers that have received a negative asylum claim or are at risk of doing so and go missing to avoid deportation, those that are wanted by the police for investigation into criminal matters or those that are fleeing domestic abuse or exploitation.

Allocated Personal Advisors and their managers should discern whether a care leaver is missing as opposed to not maintaining contact through assessing the circumstances including but not limited to whether a care leaver has gone missing from their placement, whether they have not attended college/university, whether this is out of character and whether their family or other agencies have had recent contact with them.

**The outcome of this process should be recorded as a management oversight, highlighting the actions required by whom, who should be informed or reported to. This should be reviewed and updated on a proportionate basis, by the manager – considering the assessed risks, needs and circumstances of the young person and the case.**

Where it is assessed that a care leaver is missing their Personal Advisor should complete a risk assessment that considers their individual needs and vulnerabilities such as mental health, domestic abuse, sexual exploitation, substance use and learning needs. The assessment should include any contact with relatives and other agencies and relevant information from this communication. Contact with family to discuss the individual that is missing should balance the right to privacy as an adult against assessed risks and vulnerabilities. Assessed risk to self or others should be considered when taking the decision to override the right to confidentiality.

Care leavers assessed to be missing rather than not in contact with the service should be reported as a missing adult to the Police Missing Persons Unit local to their address, providing a photograph of them, if available. This report should include reporting specific

vulnerabilities, when a professional or family member last saw them and why they are assessed to be missing.

The Home Office should be informed when former-UASC go missing. This will assist if missing former-UASC are in other Home Office regions.

**These actions should be recorded clearly with the relevant name and contact number/details of those spoken to and evidence the efforts that Personal Advisors have made to reach out and locate the individual, communication with other parties and analysis of risk**

Care leavers that are assessed to be missing should be reported to the team manager within 3 working days and to the relevant Service Manager within 5 working days. Where there are assessed vulnerabilities and risks, the reporting time scale should be reduced proportionally. The case will then be allocated to the Assistant Manager on Mosaic who will continue to track and review those missing on a weekly basis and keep the relevant Service Manager updated.

When care leavers cease to be missing it will be important for Personal Advisors to meet with them to understand their current needs and vulnerabilities and what additional support or specialist services may be helpful. This will include determining placements and whether the care leaver can return to their previous placement. Personal Advisors will inform their team manager and in turn the Service Manager when a care leaver ceases to be missing.