

Missing Practice Guidance – Children in Care placed out of area

Please refer to government guidance on roles and responsibility for the Responsible Authority (us) and the Host Authority (where the child is placed), the care home / foster carer and Police

Roles and Responsibilities

Planning and placement

- ✓ Consider appropriate placement arrangements
 - Is the child on board or against the placement?
 - How will they have calls and time with their family / friends?
 - Will this be enough to keep them from running away?
- ✓ Work with the placement and local police to assess risks
 - What areas might increase risk to the young person?
 - Map any new people they are found with
- ✓ Complete Pre-Incident Risk Assessment
 - Consider triggers/push/pull factors raised from return home interviews
- ✓ Develop appropriate strategies to prevent the child from going missing and agree how to respond when the child goes missing
 - Hold a pre-placement planning meeting
 - Which police will they be reported to if missing
 - Which service will complete the Return Home Interview (RHI)?
 - Catch22 can complete the RHI if the child is no more than 1 hour's travel away or if it is acceptable to complete by phone
 - Search for the local area MASH details to for local RHI service details – keep all details in case summary and assessment

Complete
Pre-Incident
Risk
Assessment

When a child is placed out of area, the responsible authority must notify the host authority of the placement

When a child in care goes missing

The placement should report to Police
Useful information to include: - the child's name, date of birth, description and a recent photograph; any details of where and when the child was last seen, who they were with, etc; details of family, friends and associates; details of the responsible authority

The responsible authority should provide relevant information about the missing child to the police to enable all the risk factors to be considered.

When a child in care is found

An independent return interview must be offered within 24 hours and, if accepted, provided within 72 hours of the child's return. When a looked after child is placed in a host authority, the responsible authority should ensure the independent interview occurs, working closely with the host authority.

Catch22 Details
020 3701 8641
020 3701 8643
msm@catch-22.org.uk
Website ([C22DiSC](#))

Catch22 can deliver a return home interview (RHI) if the child is no more than 1 hour's travel away or by phone. If a face-to-face RHI is required, ask if Catch22 can broker a service. If not, then seek details of the RHI service from the host authority MASH if Catch22 have not sourced these

Only if the child resides in Merton will the Police notify Catch22 that RHI needed

Review whether the child's placement remains appropriate.

The decision should be informed by discussions with the child and carers where appropriate.

Care plans should include a strategy to minimise future risk of repeated missing episodes.

IROs should be informed about missing episodes and address these in statutory reviews.