

Glossary

Abscond/absconding

Sometimes the word abscond/absconding is used to explain a child or young person leaving without permission or authorisation.

Advocate

Route 1 Advocates can support your child to make sure their views are heard. Sometimes they might help your child to write a letter, make a phone call or go to a meeting with them. An advocate can help your child to understand their rights and support them to have a say in the plans that are being made about them.

Significant harm

Significant harm is how Children's Services describe a child or young person being very unsafe and having been, or likely to be, harmed.



You are entitled to free legal advice, your child's social worker will be able to provide you with more details.



For any further information please contact your Social Worker or Independent Reviewing Officer.

Parent/Carers' Guide: Secure Accommodation and Secure Accommodation Reviews



What is Secure Accommodation?

Secure Accommodation is a secure home, which stops your child from doing things they would normally like to do (some examples include, stopping them leaving the building by locking doors, or limiting their mobile phone access).

This is done to keep them safe.

Whilst in Secure Accommodation, your child will meet with a team of professionals who will talk to them about their **health, education and behaviour.**

The Local Authority can only consider secure accommodation when all other options have been tried and where there is a **risk of immediate harm to self for the young person, or others, which cannot be managed in any other setting.**

The **Director of Children's Services must** give approval for the court to consider if your child should be placed in Secure Accommodation. A Judge must agree that Secure Accommodation is needed to keep your child safe.

The court can make the first secure order for a minimum of **3 months**, and **6 months** for any further application.

Please note: If there is a need for immediate placement in a secure setting to protect your child, then this can be agreed for 72 hours by the Director of Children's Services.

Your child's **Social Worker, the Director of Children's Services, and the Judge** must think about the following criteria before Secure Accommodation is considered:

The young person has a history of going missing, and is likely to abscond from any other accommodation

AND

If the young person goes missing/absconds, they are likely to suffer significant harm

OR

The young person is likely to injure themselves or others if placed in any other accommodation

1. What is a Secure Accommodation Review?

1. A Secure Accommodation Review aims to assess if your child continues to meet the criteria (page 2) for secure accommodation, and whether their needs can be met in any other setting.

2. When do Secure Accommodation Reviews happen?

2. The first Secure Accommodation Review must take place **within 1 month** of the date that your child moved to the secure home. After this, secure accommodation reviews must happen at least **every 3 months.**

3. What happens in the review, and who attends?

3. The Secure Accommodation Review will take place in person at the secure home.

There is an **independent panel** which includes: **the chair** (person who leads the meeting), **another panel member** and an **independent person.**

The panel considers **your views, the views of your child, and professionals** alongside the progress your child has made.

Your child and/or their advocate will be encouraged to attend the review. **You are also invited to attend your child's Secure Accommodation Review.**

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Young people in secure accommodation are 'Children Looked After', which means **Parental Responsibility is shared with yourself and the Local Authority.** Young people are entitled to an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

The Secure Accommodation Review **does not** replace the statutory Child Looked After review for your child's overall care plan, which is chaired by their IRO.

4. What happens next?

4. Once the meeting has finished, the panel will make a **decision** about whether your child needs to stay in the secure home to keep them safe. When the panel have decided the outcome, **the person chairing the review will share this with you.**

If the decision is made that your child's needs can be met in another setting, your child's Social Worker will speak with you about the available options, and planning for next steps.