



**Children and Young People who run away or go missing from
home or care**

Blackburn with Darwen Procedures

DRAFT

April 2014

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Introduction

It is a requirement that every Local Authority meets the safeguarding needs of children who run away or go missing from home or care and their families (RMFHC). This document will provide procedures for Blackburn with Darwen. It is important that these procedures are read in conjunction with the Joint Protocol entitled:

“Children and Young People who run away or go missing from home or care.”

The Protocol was written jointly by The Children’s Society, Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire County Council Children and Young People’s Services Directorate, Blackpool Council Children’s Services and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Children’s Services on behalf of the Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen Safeguarding Children Boards, who agreed the reviewed protocol in February 2014. Following the publication of the national guidance, “Statutory Guidance on Children who run away or go missing from home or care”

The responsible senior manager for children missing from home or care is David Fleming, tel: 01254 666612 or email: david.fleming@blackburn.gov.uk

Purpose

The local procedure and Lancashire’s protocol have been revised in light of statutory guidance on Children who run away or go missing from home or care.

The aim of this document is to demonstrate that Blackburn with Darwen Children Services have appropriate procedures and protocols in place to respond to the needs of Children who go missing from home or care and their families.

Information will be effectively shared and reported between the police, local authority and other partner agencies and used strategically in identifying patterns of running by individuals or by groups of young people with local services. The information will also be used in responding appropriately to reduce and eventually stop instances of missing from home or reduce the risk to the child if they continue to go missing.

It also aims to define roles and responsibilities for when a child goes missing and when they return whilst recognising indicators of underlying problems which may need further intervention.

Definitions

Throughout the report the following abbreviations are used:

CSE – Child Sexual Exploitation

IRO – Independent Reviewing officer

MASH – Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub

RMFHC – Run away, Missing from Home or Care

Key Drivers

The key driver resulting in the national guidance being revised has been the recommendations made by a number of national inquiries and reviews by the Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) and the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) to improve service responses for children who go missing and children believed to be sexually exploited. The changes made in national guidance are:

- Local Authorities must collect data on children reported missing, including from care placements, and this should be reported to Lead Members, LSCB and submitted to the Department for Education.
- LSCB's in their multi-agency training to give consideration to the safeguarding needs of children and young people who are missing from home, they are vulnerable because they are missing from home.
- A strong focus and statutory expectation that children who run away or are missing from home, including their parents, must be easily able to access support services ; the local authority is to ensure a discussion is held either with the child, their family or both to offer further support and guidance.
- There is now no longer a timescale for Police safe and well checks.
- New definition of risk and that no RMFHC incident will be classed as a low risk event.
- Within 72 hours of a child being located the child must be contacted to complete The Independent Return Interview.
- Stronger focus on the local authority, police and voluntary services to work together to build up a picture after checks and interviews of why the child went missing and what happened whilst they were away.
- Duty to notify IROs of LAC children who go missing.
- The requirements to have multi-agency meetings for frequent RMFHC removed.
- Addition of a flow chart to accompany the guidance on actions that a range of agencies should undertake for LAC; there is no corresponding flow chart for children who go missing from the family home "**Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care**" *Flowchart showing roles and responsibilities when a child goes missing from care*
- Clarity of who has what responsibility when a child placed out of borough goes missing.

The Engage approach to RMFHC

It has been agreed that Engage will from 1st April 2014 take responsibility for the completion of an independent return interview following screening from MASH. The decision was taken with the following in mind:

- Engage is independent of statutory services with an established partnership approach
- Engage is responsible for children at risk of sexual exploitation which has direct links to missing from home
- Engage has a well-established safeguarding model which promotes engagement with children and families across the continuum of need and response

An action plan will be created after an independent return interview detailing interventions required with the child and family. It is important to note that in some cases, the lead professional role for the interventions will be the Engage Team, but where a child is already open to early help/CAF or social care led services, or where assessments at s.17 or s.47 of the Children Act (1989) recommend services are provided at these or early help levels, the lead professional to ensure interventions are met will be the relevant CAF lead professional or social worker.

Relationship between CSE and RMFHC

It is well established through both practice (evidenced locally and nationally) and research that the majority of children and young people who have been sexually exploited have experienced to some extent or other RMFHC behaviours.

Indeed operation Engage 2005/2008 was set up as a response to high numbers of BWD children reported to be missing from home or care in which “grooming” and CSE was one of the major contributors in pulling children out of the home or care placement.

The role of Engage with missing children is to conduct an independent RMFHC return interview. The primary purpose is to understand any push and pull factors relevant to the missing episode and establish an action plan for the relevant professional to implement.

If there is evidence of risk to CSE Engage will consider the dual task of completing a CSE assessment and share the findings with the named professional or commence work with the child and family.

(see CSE Continuum of Need and Response for guidance)

Engage will not conduct a CSE assessment in all RMFHC interviews

Any professional with concerns of risk to CSE should follow Engage referral pathways and in cases of immediate risk contact

Engage on 01254 56145, email: Engage.Team@Blackburn.gov.uk or contact the police 101, email: Engage@lancashire.pnn.police.uk

Independent RMFHC Return Interviews

Interviews should be conducted by an independent person to the child and ideally not undertaken by a professional involved in their respective care planning unless requested by the child and agreed by all involved parties including Engage who will continue to oversee the RMFHC process. Interviews should be carried out in a timely manner; 72 hours from return to placement and conducted in an independent venue.

If the Social Worker or other professional believes that the interview should be conducted sooner than 72 hours contact should be made ASAP with Engage who will consider completing the interview within 24 hours.

The interview will:

- Identify and address any harm suffered by the child
- Understand and address the reasons for running away

The purpose of the interviews is to:-

- **Understand and prevent further episodes of running away**

And/or

- **Assist the child to feel safe if we are unable to prevent repeat instances**

See appendix 2 for “Missing from Home or Care Principles”

Consent

At the point a child is reported missing to the police, the police will seek consent from the parent or carer to share information with children’s social care. National guidance on RMFHC and information sharing are clear that at this point whilst the child is missing, the child should be considered at risk of significant harm/likely to suffer significant harm and so if consent is refused, police can share the information without consent. As outlined in the BwD Continuum of Need and Response Framework, practitioners must ensure they record accurately that consent has been sought and where refused, the reason for sharing information between agencies without consent.

If information relating to the RMFHC incident is shared by the police after the child has returned to its home or placement, or after the police have conducted a ‘safe and well check’, consent to share information will be required unless the checks identify the child to have suffered significant harm or at risk of significant harm. The agency sharing information with children’s social care (and within MASH) will be required to evidence consent and where applicable the reasons to share information without consent.

RMFHC Pathway

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RMFHC Pathway

Blackburn with Darwen Children's Services continues to work in close partnership with Lancashire Constabulary and other partners on a localised level. The Engage Team who represents a multi-agency response to the issue of child sexual exploitation (CSE) will as stated previously, take upon itself lead responsibility for undertaking return interviews for children missing from home or care in BWD.

The following pathway will evidence roles and responsibilities including:

Police

To ensure a timely response to all RMFHC notifications it is the responsibility of the Police Missing from Home Co-ordinator (PMFHC) to forward all notifications to Children's Services, via the MASH.

MASH

The MASH will be responsible for ensuring all safeguarding duties are met above and beyond the need to carry out a return interview. These may include assessments under Section 17 and Section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Any actions taken should be shared with the Engage Team in light of their duties to carry out an independent return interview.

Engage

Engage are responsible for ensuring that all independent return interviews are carried out following a screening based upon reflection of information provided and any known history relating to the child and its circumstances. Engage will cross reference against the national guidance and the agreed regional protocol on when an independent return interview should be completed.

Decision

Any actions determined by either MASH or Engage must be recorded on protocol and shared with all relevant professionals.

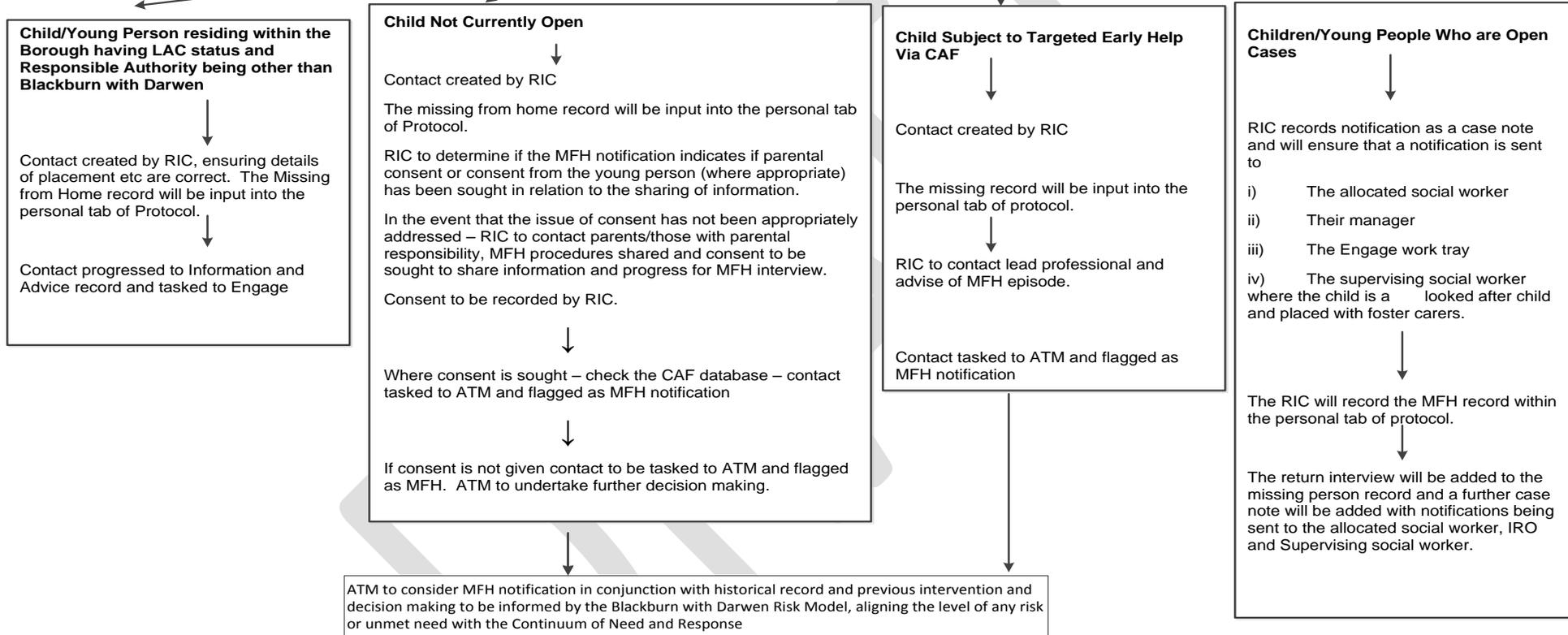
Completion of an independent return interview may lead to an action plan that should be delivered by the agreed lead professional.

MASH Processes for Missing from Home Notifications and Cancellations
In response to Statutory Guidance on children who run away or go missing from Home or Care

MFH Co-ordinator - email

cypreferrals@blackburn.gcsx.gov.uk

A designated Referral and Information Co-ordinator (RIC) will be tasked with checking the mailbox routinely, once in the morning and once in the afternoon in order to ensure prompt process required for compliance with the Missing From Home (MFH) National Guidance.



Outcomes

- 1. Child/young person's needs deemed to be between levels 1 and 2 on the Continuum of Need and response** – contact progressed to Information and Advice record and tasked to Engage work tray for consideration/allocation for return interview and CSE risk assessment.
- 2. Child's needs are deemed to be at levels 3 and 4 on the Continuum of Need and Response** – contact progressed to information and advice record and tasked to Engage.

Further duplicate contact created and tasked to ATM assessment and Social work for case allocation.

Planning and Reviewing Children RMFHC

It is in the best interests of all agencies concerned to consider what support the child and family require following RMFHC.

Looked After Children (LAC)

With regards to LAC the risk of RMFHC and CSE must be considered before a placement is made and at regular intervals thereafter. The care planning process will be followed and will allow for regular oversight re: RMFHC and CSE and is chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO).

There will not be an ongoing need for RMFHC intervention meetings due to the agreed process. However if a single significant missing from home episode or a quick succession of episodes occurs, the child's review should be brought forward and chaired by the IRO.

On the occasions where BwD is the host authority for LAC it is the responsibility of the home local authority to ensure that plans are reviewed by the social worker and IRO

Children Subject to Child Protection Plans

With regards to children subject to child protection (CP) plans, and RMFHC instances and vulnerabilities identified indicating CSE must be considered as part of the initial/review conference and core group meeting's. The CP review process will allow for regular oversight and is chaired independently by an IRO.

If there is a requirement for a meeting to take place following a single significant missing from home episode or quick succession of episodes occurring the CP review meeting should be brought forward and chaired by an IRO.

Children open to Social Care (Child in Need Plan) and/or lead professional (CAF)

With regards to children subject to a Child in Need Plan (CIN) and RMFHC instances and vulnerabilities identified indicating CSE must be considered as part of the initial meeting and subsequent meeting's. The CIN review process will allow for regular oversight and is chaired by a Social Work Team Manager.

With regards to children subject to a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and RMFHC instances and vulnerabilities identified indicating CSE must be considered as part of the initial meeting and subsequent meeting's. The CAF review process will allow for regular oversight and is chaired by a Lead Professional or agreed named person.

If there is a requirement for a meeting to take place following a single significant missing from home episode or quick succession of episodes occurred, the meeting should be brought forward and chaired by an agreed professional.

Children not open to social care / lead professional

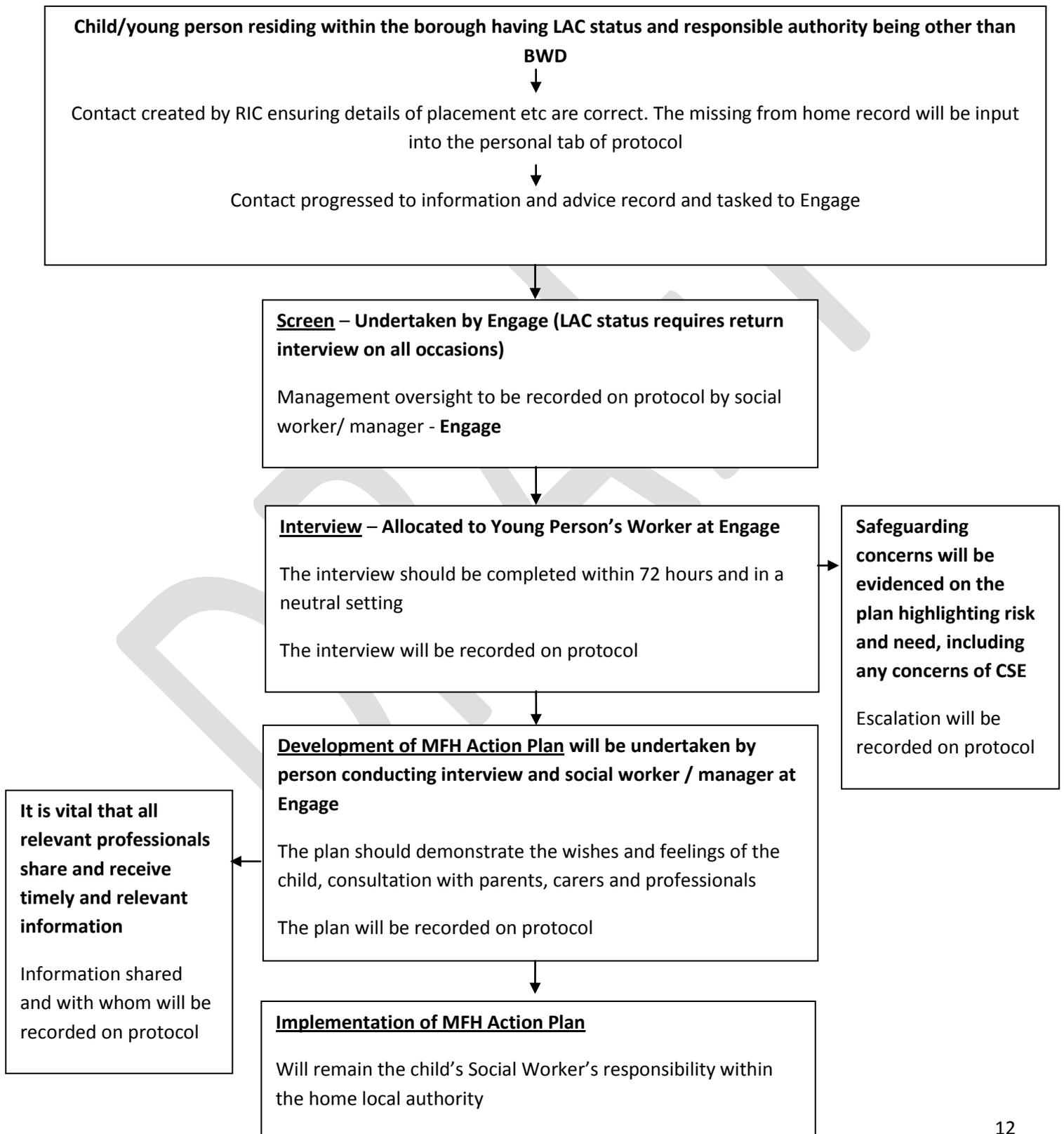
With regards to children not subject to any plan or in receipt of support from any agency, the issue of MFH and CSE will be addressed by the Engage Team with intervention and support delivered to the child and family.

Where a return interview identifies the need for multi-agency intervention for a child, the relevant referral to either CAF or social care will be made. The return interview will help inform the CAF assessment or Single Assessment. Please bear in mind that the statutory timescale for completing a Single Assessment (also a local timescale for CAF) begins when the MFH instance is reported as a contact into the MASH. Delays in referring back to social care/early help to initiate the assessment will impact on the likelihood of meeting national and local timescales.

If there is a requirement for a meeting to take place following a single significant missing from home episode or quick succession of episodes occurred, the meeting should be brought forward and chaired by an agreed professional from the Engage Team.

See appendix 1 – Roles and responsibilities in completing missing from home (MFH) return interviews, implementing MFH action plans and review.

Child/young person residing within the borough having LAC status and responsible authority being other than BWD



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Review of MFH Action Plan

Will be conducted by IRO or Team Manager within the home local authority

Contact created by RIC

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The MFH record will be put in the personal tab on protocol

RIC to determine if the MFH notification indicates if parental consent or consent from the young person (where appropriate) has been sought in relation to the sharing of information

In the event that the issue of consent has not been appropriately addressed – RIC to contact parents/those with parental responsibility, MFH procedures shared and consent to be sought to share information and progress to MFH interview

Consent recorded by RIC

Where consent is sought – check the CAF database – contact tasked to ATM and flagged as MFH notification

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If consent is not given contact to be tasked to ATM and flagged as MFH. ATM to undertake further decision making

↓

Screen – Undertaken by Engage

Management oversight to be recorded on protocol by duty manger - **Engage**

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No interview required

Decision not to progress to interview to be recorded on protocol by social worker / manager Engage

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Interview – Allocated to Young Person’s Worker at Engage

The interview should be completed within 72 hours and in a neutral setting

The interview will be recorded on protocol

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Safeguarding

concerns will be evidenced on the plan highlighting risk and need, including any concerns of CSE

Escalation will be recorded on protocol

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Development of MFH Action Plan will be undertaken by person conducting interview and Social Worker / Manager at Engage

The plan should demonstrate the wishes and feelings of the child, consultation with parents, carers and professionals

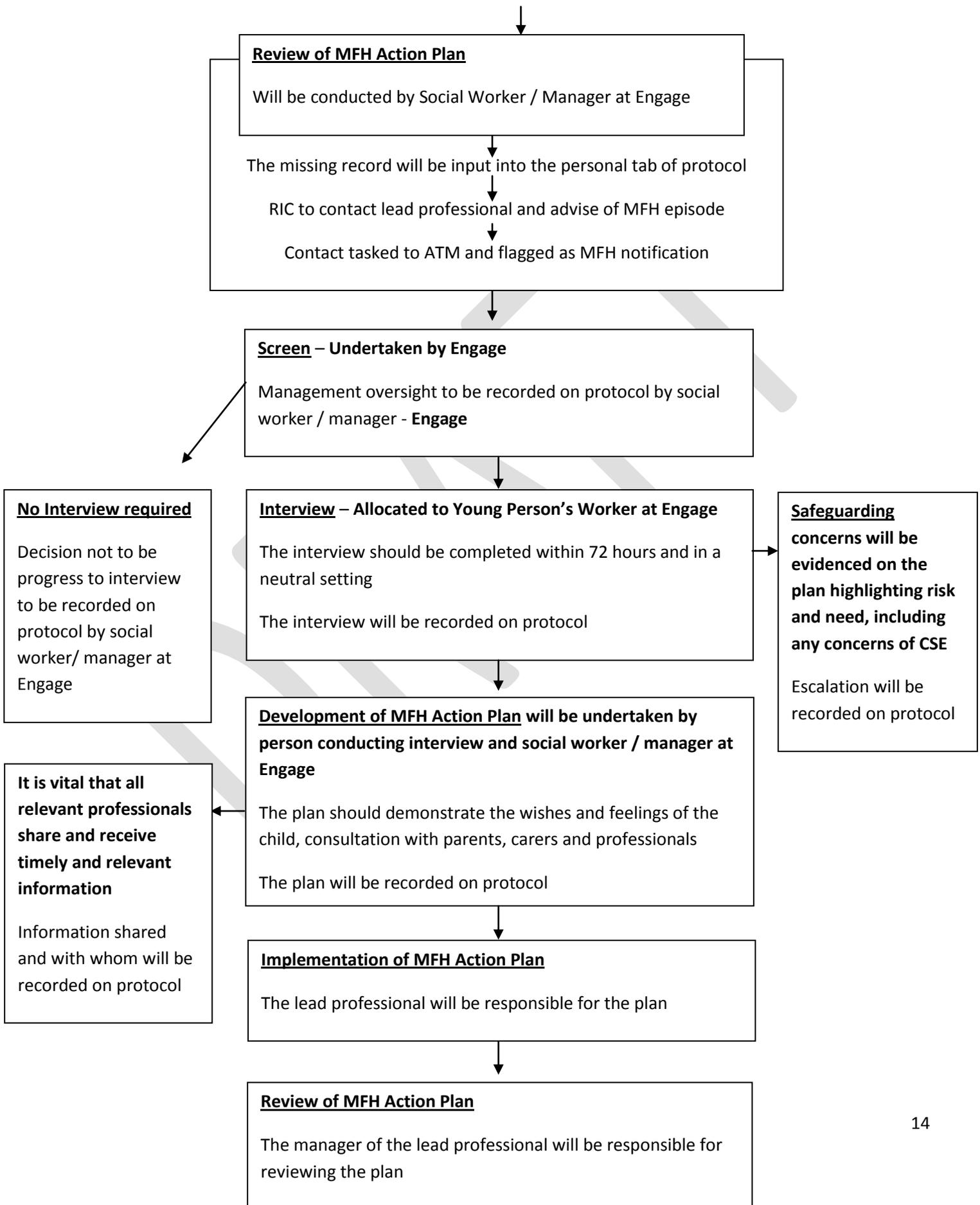
The plan will be recorded on protocol

↓

Implementation of MFH Action Plan

Where the plan is not part of the CAF Assessment or Single Assessment the allocated worker at Engage will be responsible for the plan

The plan will be recorded on protocol



Children who are open cases

Children who are open cases

RIC records notification as a case note and will ensure that a notification is sent to:

- The allocated social worker
- Their manager
- The Engage work tray
- The supervising social worker where the child is a looked after child and placed with foster carers

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The MFH record will be input into the personal tab within Protocol following return interview

↓
The return interview will be added to the missing person record and a further case note will be added with notifications being sent to the allocated social worker, IRO and supervising social worker.

Screen – Undertaken by Engage (LAC status requires return interview on all occasions)

Management oversight to be recorded on protocol by social worker / manager - Engage

No interview required

Decision not to be progress to interview to be recorded on protocol by duty manager Engage (only applicable for CIN and CP cases)

Interview – Allocated to Young Person’s Worker at Engage

The interview should be completed within 72 hours and in a neutral setting

The interview will be recorded on protocol

Safeguarding concerns will be evidenced on the plan highlighting risk and need, including any concerns of CSE

Escalation will be recorded on protocol

Development of MFH Action Plan will be undertaken by person conducting interview and social worker/ manager at Engage

The plan should demonstrate the wishes and feelings of the child, consultation with parents, carers and professionals

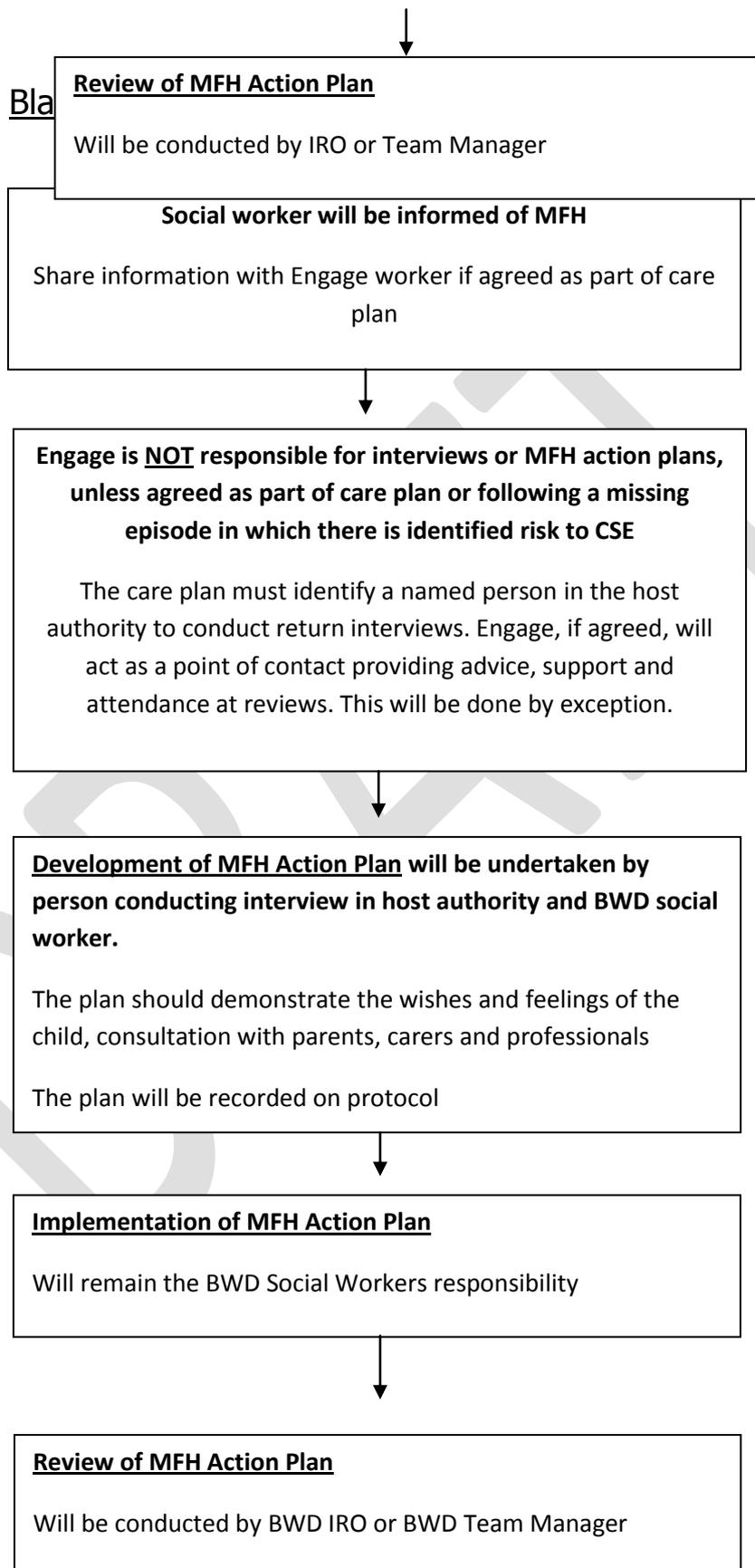
The plan will be recorded in the personal tab on protocol

It is vital that all relevant professionals share and receive timely and relevant information

Information shared and with whom will be recorded on protocol

Implementation of MFH Action Plan

Will remain the Social Workers responsibility



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Safeguarding

Introduction to Interview Process

The following will break down the requirements for interview, action planning and review of:

- Children residing within the Borough having LAC status and responsible authority being other than Blackburn with Darwen
- Children not currently open
- Children subject to Targeted Early Help via CAF
- Children who are open cases

Safeguarding (Screening and Interview Process)

1) Screen

Engage has 2 options available following screening of MFH notification which is to carry out an independent return interview or close contact at this point, (this option is not applicable for LAC) without the need for an independent return interview to be completed. All cases progressing to closure must clearly demonstrate management oversight, be shared with relevant professionals and recorded on Protocol.

If the decision is taken to progress to interview, management oversight should be evident and shared with relevant professionals.

2) Interview

It is acknowledged that where a child goes missing, a return interview should be carried out unless it is not deemed necessary based upon the report received as part of the safe and well check and the circumstances of which are known. In these cases, a reasonable decision should be taken for **no interview** to be taken following comprehensive screening and recorded appropriately. A LAC requires an interview in all circumstances.

This is an in-depth interview and will be carried out by a young persons worker from Engage who is able to establish the reason why the child went missing, follow-up any actions that emerge and who is able to establish a relationship with the child. It is vital that information is sourced and support offered to other relevant people e.g. family, social worker, IRO and school etc. A return interview should:

- Identify and address any harm the child has suffered
- Understand and address the reason(s) why the child ran away
- Provide the child information on how to stay safe if they choose to run away
- Help the child feel safe and assist their understanding in how to prevent repeat instances.

It is now acknowledged that the interview will take place within 72 hours of the child being located or returned home / care setting. The interview will take place at a neutrally agreed venue where the child feels safe, therefore providing the child with an opportunity to discuss the reasons why they went missing and to consider the risks faced whilst missing. It is especially important that a return Interview takes place when a child:

- Has been missing on two or more occasions;
- Has engaged (or is believed to have engaged) in criminal activities during their absence
- Has been hurt or harmed whilst they have been missing (or this is believed to have been the case)
- Has known mental health issues
- Is known to be vulnerable to CSE or is being sexually exploited/trafficked
- Has contact with persons posing risk to children
- Is frequently away from placement or their home with authorisation.

3) Development of MFH Action Plan

Engage will on completion of an independent return interview consider the needs of the child and family. If the intervention required is only specific / isolated to risks associated with missing from home, Engage will carry out work to assist in the reduction of missing from home episodes and where this is not currently possible Engage will provide the child with information on how to stay safe. It is vitally important and a new statutory requirement that the intervention work with the child is replicated with parents.

CSE (Engage)

When carrying out an independent return interview, the young person's worker through vulnerabilities being identifies decide to, if necessary, complete a CSE Assessment. If the return interview suggests that the child is being sexually exploited or vulnerable to sexual exploitation, ongoing intervention will be provided by Engage following closure of the return interview process.

4) Implementation of MFH Action Plan

Engage will carry out an independent return interview, including those currently open to other professionals. Once completed, the independent return interview will detail any ongoing interventions required from the lead professional and where appropriate will offer the opportunity of intervention from Engage in relation to CSE and MFH.

5) Review of MFH Action Plan

It is imperative that the action plans following a return interview are acted upon and reviewed accordingly. The responsibility to undertake this sits with the relevant Team Manager and IRO if the child is a Looked After Child.

Signpost to Other Agency (including Escalation)

Following completion of an independent return interview, it may be determined that ongoing intervention is required other than CSE / MFH intervention plan. In such cases Engage will ensure that closure reflects the need for further assessment or support. All such cases will be referred back to the MASH and/or Transforming Lives Panel.

Any unmet needs and/or risks identified by Engage must be shared immediately with MASH or lead professional.

6) Close

Once an independent return interview has been completed and no intervention is required a case can progress to closure following management oversight. All closures will ensure that information is provided to children on how to keep safe and to parents/carers on who to keep their child safe

Management Information

Engage produces a quarterly commission based report card which currently details missing from home information including:

- Total number of reports
- Gender / age breakdown
- Address from which children go missing

Engage partnership has agreed to ensure additional reporting in the form of the following:

- Percentage of screens to interview
- Percentage of interviews completed with 72 hours
- Record outcomes

The Engage steering group, which is a sub-group of LSCB, will ensure regular analysis and direction to the team when considering patterns in relation to child missing from home or care.

Any queries, advice or support can be sought from The Engage Team, Nick McPartlan and/or David Fleming.

Appendices

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Appendix 1

Roles and responsibilities in completing missing from home (MFH) interviews, implementing MFH action plans and review.

<u>Child</u>	<u>Interview (who will conduct)</u>	<u>MFH Action Plan (Responsibility to implement plan)</u>	<u>Review (Responsibility to review plan)</u>
Child/young person residing within the borough having LAC status and responsible authority being other than BWD	Engage	Childs Social Worker (not BWD)	IRO or Team Manager (not BWD)
Child not currently open	Engage	Young Person's Worker - Engage	Social worker / Team Manager - Engage
Child Subject to Targeted Early Help via CAF	Engage	Lead professional	Team Manager of lead professional
Children who are open cases	Engage	Childs Social Worker	Team Manager or IRO
Blackburn with Darwen LAC placed out of borough	To be negotiated by Social Worker	Childs Social Worker	IRO



“Missing from Home or Care Principles”

“Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care” was published January ’14.

Key principles when considering children missing from home or care include:

- SAFEGUARDING - Missing from home should be embedded in work streams, risk management plans will be implemented and reviews of plans required
- INDEPENDENT - Interviews should be conducted by an independent person who is not directly involved with care planning
- ESTABLISH UNDERLYING FACTORS - missing from home is the single biggest indicator of risk to child sexual exploitation and therefore associations should be made between the two areas of work. Other push and pull factors should be established.

BwD Model

Engage will take on responsibilities to complete missing from home return interviews and the creation of missing from home risk management plans from the 1st of April ’14. This will ensure:-

- TIMELY – interviews completed within 72 hours
- RISK MANAGED - Risk management plans developed
- SHARED - Appropriate information is shared accordingly

(Local procedures will reflect best practice and should be read in conjunction with the national guidance “Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care” and the regional protocol “Children and Young People who run away or go missing from home or care” as available on tri-x)

Risk Management Plans

ESTABLISHED – the development of the missing from home risk management plan sits with engage

IMPLEMENTED – the responsibility to ensure that the missing from home risk management plan is fully actioned sits with the lead professional and/or Social Worker.

REVIEWED – the responsibility to ensure that the social worker and/or lead professional implements and actions the missing from home risk management plan sits with the line manager of the lead professional.

(if the child is looked after or on a Child Protection Plan the IRO will review) Details of the lead person in local authority responsible for children missing from home or care is David Fleming, Youth Justice Service Manager, 01254 666612. Alternatively you can contact Nick McPartlan, Engage Manager, 01254 56145.

Information for parents and carers

Before contacting the police:

- Check your child's bedroom, and everywhere in the house to make sure they are not in the home.
- Check garden, sheds, garages and surrounding area.
- Try and contact your child by telephone, text or by social network sites (such as Facebook, Twitter or BBM)
- Have a look in local area's where you know your child associates.
- Check with your child's friends, family friends, neighbours, family members or anyone who may know where your son or daughter may be. Ask them to contact immediately if they have any contact with your Son or Daughter, or know of their whereabouts.

If after these checks you still do not know where your child is you need to contact the police and report your child missing.

Contacting the police:

If after these checks you still do not know where your child is you need to contact the police and report your child missing.

- Ring 101, or 51415 and report your child missing. You do not have to wait 24 hours to report your child missing.
- The police will ask you if you have done the checks above, inform police of anyone who you have contacted, and any names of people who you have been unable to contact.

They will then ask you the following questions:

- When and where was your child last seen, and by who?
- When and where did you last see your child?
- What were they doing when you last saw them?
- Are you worried, and why? Is this out of character for your child?
- Do you think you know why your child is missing? Has any significant happened recently?
- What was your child wearing?
- Are there any clothes or items missing?
- Does your child have any money with them, or access to some?
- Are they taking any medication?

Other things you can do:

- Check home computers for any leads, such as online contacts, or details of planned meetings
- Find out if any of your child's friends are missing.
- Have a recent photograph available (the police may need it)
- Check recent phone bills to see if there are any unfamiliar phone numbers.
- Keep your phone on, this may be the only way your child, or any one with any information can contact you

You may be visited by a police officer who will take a detailed missing person report. They will also need to check your child's bedroom to see if there are any missing clothes, letters or information which may help them to locate your Son or Daughter.

When your child returns home:

If your child returns home of their own accord it is important that you show them you are happy to have them home, try and stay calm and offer them the opportunity to speak to you about why they have been missing

You will need to contact the police to inform them that your Son or Daughter has returned. The police will need to speak or see your Son or Daughter to make sure they are safe and well.

If your child needs any medical attention please seek this immediately.

If possible contact people you contacted earlier to inform your child has returned.

A trained worker to arrange to visit your Son or Daughter for a return home interview will contact you. This is an informal chat with your child to see if any support can be offered to assist with any issues, and help to prevent any further missing from home episodes.

This will also identify if your child was at risk, or came to any harm whilst missing.

Other support and advice available to parents

Missing people UK

www.missingpeople.org.uk or

www.missingkids.co.uk

phone or text 116 00

NSPCC

Email : help@nspcc.org.uk

Phone 0808 800 5000

The Children's society

WWW.childrensociety.org.uk

Support and information for young people

Lots of young people feel the need to run away from home for many different reasons, these can be:

- Problems at home
- Problems at school
- Problems on line
- Worries about getting into trouble ie : with the police

If you feel like you want to run away try and speak to a trusted adult about your feelings. This could be a parent, aunty, uncle, an older brother or sister, a teacher, pastoral support, social worker or youth worker.

You may feel that the problem is too big to resolve, or that you will be in trouble, that no one will listen or believe you, or that you may get someone into trouble.

But there are people who will listen and will help with any problem, no matter how big you feel the problems are.

Where else to go for help

Childline is a national childrens charity who offer support and advice to young people about any issue :



They can be contacted 24 hours a day on the phone and they also offer online advice and live chat.

visit : www.childline.org.uk



NSPCC is a national children's charity who offer support and advice to children, young people and adults. There are people who you can speak to 24 hours a day on the phone or on line.

**missing
people**

Registered Charity No. 1020419

Is a national charity who offer support to young people who have run away, or are thinking of running away.

They can be contacted on the phone free on 116000 and also text 116000 – even if you have no credit. You can also chat on line on 116000missingpeople@org.uk

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Appendix 5

Missing from Home agreement between BWD and receiving provider

“Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care” was published January ’14.

Key principles when considering children missing from home or care include:

- **SAFEGUARDING** - Missing from home should be embedded in work streams, risk management plans will be implemented and reviews of plans required
- **INDEPENDENT** - Interviews should be conducted by an independent person who is not directly involved with care planning
- **ESTABLISH UNDERLYING FACTORS** - missing from home is the single biggest indicator of risk to child sexual exploitation and therefore associations should be made between the two areas of work. Other push and pull factors should be established.

The provider will:

- Adhere to local MFH policy
- Complete interviews in line with above policy
- Interviews will be:
 - TIMELY – efforts should be made to complete interviews within 72 hours
 - RISK MANAGED - Risk management plans developed
 - SHARED - Appropriate information is shared accordingly with agreed professionals

(Local procedures will reflect best practice and should be read in conjunction with the national guidance “Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care.”)

- Risk Management Plans will be:
 - ESTABLISHED – the development of the missing from home risk management plan sits with person conducting the interview or as per agreement of local missing from home policy.
 - IMPLEMENTED – the responsibility to ensure that the missing from home risk management plan is fully actioned sits with the Social Worker.
 - REVIEWED – the responsibility to ensure that the social worker implements and actions the missing from home risk management plan sits with the line manager and will be reviewed by Independent reviewing officer.
- Details of the lead person in the relevant local authority should be documented acknowledging responsibility for children missing from home or care. In BWD the named person and relevant contact is David Fleming, Youth Justice Service Manager, 01254 666612. Alternatively you can contact Nick McPartlan, Engage Manager, 01254 56145.

Role of Engage

Engage is a specialist multi-agency co-located partnership established to support children and families at risk of child sexual exploitation and Missing from Home. Engage will act as a point of contact for the Social Worker and placement provider for all **agreed** children placed out of borough and will offer:

- Review and advice of completed missing from home interviews
- Explore risk and advice re CSE
- Attend reviews **where appropriate**
- Consultation **where appropriate**