

July 2022

**Children Missing From Home and Care
Joint Procedures**



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A INTRODUCTION

- 1 This protocol supersedes the previous Inter-Agency Joint Protocol relating to 'Children Missing from Home and Care' which was revised in 2019.
- 2 When a child goes missing, they are at potential risk of harm and therefore safeguarding children arrangements must include protocols for preventing or protecting them from going missing from their home or local authority care setting.
- 3 This protocol defines the roles and responsibilities of all those concerned with the processes around children who go missing. It is derived from the Department for Education '*Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care January 2014*' and incorporates key elements of the [College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice \(APP\)](#) guidance. This protocol responds to the concept of the 'hidden' missing as outlined within the DfE guidance and is also consistent with the requirements of the Philomena Protocol.

Role of the Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP)

- 4 The Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership (NCSCP) and the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) expect all agencies working, or in contact with children, to implement this protocol and to ensure all relevant staff are aware of it and how to use it. The protocol depends on good communication and a willingness by agencies to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of those children who are at risk of or going missing.
- 5 Both Safeguarding Children Partnerships will be responsible for ensuring an annual review of the effectiveness of the protocol.

Role of partner agencies

- 6 While the police and children's social care take the lead with children who go missing from home or care, there is a responsibility on all relevant agencies to support a young person who is going missing, for example, school, health or specialist services.

B DEFINITIONS

- 7 There are a number of definitions in the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance (2014) and the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice (APP) guidance (January 2017) addressing a variety of scenarios where children go missing or runaway from or are not where they are expected to be at their home or care placements. The definitions have been simplified for the purpose of this protocol.
- 8 The definitions of the terms used in this Protocol are as follows:
- **Child:** Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' refers to 'children and young people' throughout this guidance.
 - **Missing child:** A child reported as missing and graded by the police as high or medium risk, whose **whereabouts cannot be established** will be considered as **missing** until **located**, and their **well-being or otherwise confirmed**.
 - **Away from placement without authorisation:** A looked after child whose whereabouts is known but who is not at their placement or place they are expected to be and the carer has concerns.
 - **Looked after child:** A child who is looked after by a local authority by reason of a care order or being accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989.
 - **Responsible local authority:** The local authority that is responsible for a looked after child's care and care planning.
 - **Host local authority:** The local authority in which a looked after child is placed when placed out of the responsible local authority's area.
 - **Care leaver:** An eligible, relevant or former relevant child as defined by the Children Act 1989.
 - **Absconder:** Where a child is subject to a court order such as a curfew or bail conditions and the Police **are aware** of the order and the expiry date then they can be considered as an absconder and not as a missing person. Common sense and professional judgement should apply however and if for example there is a high level of risk then the Protocol could be applied.
 - **Hidden Missing:** Where a child is going missing but is not reported to the police by their parents, carers or agencies who become aware.
 - **Philomena Protocol:** The Philomena Protocol is an initiative to help locate and

safely return children and young people in care as quickly as possible when they are missing. The scheme encourages carers, staff, and families to compile useful information which could be used in the event of a young person going missing from care to help find them quickly and safely.

C KEY CONTACTS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Operational contacts

- 9 Where professionals believe a child is at immediate risk this should be reported without delay to Nottinghamshire Police on the emergency number 999. Non-emergency calls can be made by calling 101.
- 10 Children's Services can be contacted at Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council, directly to the child or young person's allocated worker where they have one or if they do not then to:
- 11 ***County - Children Missing Officer (CMO)***

The role of the CMO is to act as a central point of contact for all missing children notifications and to disseminate them with requests for a return home interview, multi- agency meeting or referral to social care in line with the Missing Children Protocol. The CMO also has a key role in the monitoring and tracking of compliance with key requirements.

County

Children Missing Officer

missing.homeandcare1@nottscc.gov.uk

0115 8041272

- 12 ***City – The Missing Children's Team***

The role of the Missing Children's Team is to act as a central point of contact for all missing children notifications and to disseminate them with requests for a return home interview, multi-agency meeting or referral to social care in line with the Missing Children Protocol.

City

Missing Children's Team

Nottinghamcity.MissingChildrenTeam@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

0115 8764716

13 Police Missing Persons Coordinators

The Missing Persons Coordinators will assist divisional police officers in the investigation of missing person enquiries and will represent Nottinghamshire Police in multi-agency, problem solving approaches to children who are vulnerable or frequently missing. They will play a key role in ensuring national guidance, force procedures and this joint protocol are embedded and adhered to at a local level, thereby aiming to reduce repeated missing episodes and associated risks.

missingpersons@notts.police.uk

14 Quality Assurance Role of the Police Missing Person Coordinators

One of the functions of the police Missing Person Coordinators is to provide a quality assurance role in monitoring compliance with the APP 'missing' definition within the police force. As part of this, they will collate and monitor information relating to low risk missing incidents, ensuring that records for individuals can be distinguished and reviewed. Information relating to 'low risk missing' incidents should be shared with agreed contacts within five days.

15 Intelligence sharing

In the absence of any named officer dealing with a young person; child specific intelligence can be shared through missingpersons@notts.police.uk For urgent information sharing use 101 or 999.

Strategic contacts for police and children's social care

16 Police

Missing Persons Team
missingpersons@notts.police.uk
call 101 Ext 3180966

17 Nottinghamshire County Council

Hannah Johnson
Service Manager, Safeguarding Children (Strategic)
hannah1.johnson@nottsc.gov.uk
0115 8546351

Claire Sampson
Group Manager, Safeguarding, Assurance and improvement
claire.sampson@nottscc.gov.uk
0115 8041963

18 Nottingham City Council

Evelyn Hailwood
Principal Manager of Child Protection Chairs, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
Evelyn.Hailwood@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
0115 8761203

John Matravers
Head of Service for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
john.matravers@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
0115 8764373

D LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

- 19 This protocol derives from the Department for Education 'Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care January 2014' which is issued under Section 7 of the Local Authority Services Act 1970. A flow chart for professionals is available under this guidance:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/275701/Statutory_guidance_missing-children.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271820/Flowchart_when_a_child_goes_missing_from_care.pdf

- 20 The DfE guidance complements Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 & 2020 and links to a number of strategies, action plans and research listed at the conclusion of this protocol. This guidance must be complied with unless there are exceptional reasons.
- 21 The protocol should be read in conjunction with other relevant Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) and Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership (NCSCP) procedures, for example child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, children missing education, child protection or children in need procedures. <http://nottinghamshirescb.proceduresonline.com/index.html>
- 22 The protocol incorporates key information from the College of Policing, Authorised Professional Practice (2016)
<https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/missing-persons/missing-person-investigations/?s=missing+children>

Children's Homes Regulations and National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services

- 23 As well as following this protocol, children's homes and fostering services should take due regard to their relevant national minimum standards and regulations in relation to missing children. They should have an explicit procedure in place to prevent children going missing and detail what action should be taken if they do.
- 24 The independent visitor who monitors the effectiveness of the home's arrangements (for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare) should be satisfied with the response to children who go missing. They should routinely examine missing reports and where possible see children and staff privately.

Human Rights Act 1998

- 25 The Human Rights Act 1998 has been considered as part of this protocol. This protocol aims to strike a balance between the rights of the individual and their family and the child or young person's right to be safeguarded even if this means external agencies intervening.

Data Protection Act 1998

- 26 The personal details of any individual are considered personal data including information about the missing child or young person, the person reporting, people associating with the missing child and any other person whose details have been recorded as a result of enquiries.
- 27 Additional information such as medical history or offending behaviour may be considered sensitive information and should be handled accordingly and exchanged and held securely.

Information Sharing

A multi-agency information sharing protocol has been completed and is available from the Police or City and County strategic leads

E SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES and SCOPE

- 28 The overriding principle is that every missing child episode is potentially serious; when a child is reported missing, it is a safeguarding issue and there is a responsibility on agencies to work together. The protocol should be read as guidance; it cannot anticipate every situation and professional judgement should be applied to all cases.
- 29 The aim of the protocol is to stop or reduce the incidence of all children going missing and to prevent or reduce the risk of them being harmed. Every missing episode should attract the attention of the professionals involved through a robust, coherent and consistent approach.
- 30 Going missing is a symptom of something going wrong in a child or young person's life. They may be 'pushed' away from home, 'pulled' towards something outside of home or a combination of both known as 'push/pull factors'. Issues often relate to relationship or boundary difficulties with parents or carers, placement quality or being placed too far away from home, peer and friendship relationship issues, conflict or bullying or difficulties in school. They may be harmed in a number of tangible or intangible ways.
- 31 Children who go missing for the first time, or for short periods of time, can face a number of risks and dangers which can impact on their life. For example:
- Being sexually exploited (CSE), criminally exploited (CCE) or involved in gangs
 - Becoming a victim or perpetrator of crime or financially exploited
 - Homelessness
 - Negative impact on education
 - Loss of or deterioration of social and family relationships
 - Involvement in drugs
 - Impact on physical, emotional or mental health
 - Trafficking
- 32 It is important that, through an effective return home interview and assessment, children are listened to and the reasons why children and young people go missing are understood and the risk appreciated. This provides a basis for intervening effectively to stop or reduce the instances of missing.
- 33 This protocol is designed for all children living within Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County boundaries deemed missing from home or care or other placement by the Police.
- 34 It includes children looked after by other Local Authorities (**the responsible Authority**) placed in the City or County boundaries, in children's homes or foster

homes from the public or private sector. The **host authorities** (City and County) have responsibility to apply the protocol to these children. Depending on the needs of the incident, it may be appropriate for the ownership of the enquiry to be transferred to the responsible authority police force in accordance with APP guidance.

- 35 It covers those children looked after by Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City and placed **outside** of the local authority boundaries; the local protocol of the **host authority** will also apply. In these cases, the initial police response will be by the Force in the geographical area where the child was reported missing from. Depending on the needs of the incident, it may be appropriate for ownership to be transferred to Nottinghamshire Police in accordance with APP guidance.
- 36 The Police will risk assess each child who is reported missing and classify the incident as either low, medium, or high risk, and this will dictate the initial Police response. It should be noted however that no child shall be deemed low risk missing who is:
- at risk of/experiencing child exploitation
 - an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child (UASC)
 - 13 years and under
 - any person recorded on the ALWAYS MISSING list (refer to GI pages) - The list is CONFIDENTIAL to Notts police

The hidden missing

- 37 It is known that a substantial number of children who go missing are not reported to the police. Professionals should be alert to this.
- 38 If it comes to the attention of any agency that a child is still missing and has not been reported to the police, parents or carers should be advised to report this and professionals have a duty to follow this up. Professionals including schools, colleges, health and jobcentre plus and others are in good positions to identify these children, the 'hidden' missing, and the significant number of children who would not otherwise be reported.
- 39 If the child who was not reported as missing to the police has returned, professionals should ensure the Children Missing Officer is aware of the young person and the missing incident, suspected or confirmed.

Sixteen and Seventeen year olds

- 40 Missing 16 and 17 year olds are not less vulnerable than younger children and are equally at serious risk including risk of various forms of exploitation. Should they present as homeless, their needs will be assessed and may indicate they are

a child in need requiring accommodation under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989.

Looked After Children

- 41 When it is identified that a looked after young person is at risk of going missing, this must be discussed with the young person unless it is judged this would increase any risk factors, and part 1 of the **Philomena protocol** document must be completed by the child's social worker in conjunction with the child's carer or placement staff. The forms must be stored safely in the young person's placement. The social worker must save an up to date copy of the protocol on the child's social care electronic file and this is to be sent to the police as soon as possible once the risk of going missing has been identified. This ensures that information essential in locating the young person is recorded and readily accessible to the police should the young person go missing from their placement and there are concerns for their safety. The Philomena Protocol forms must be regularly updated: at a minimum following a change of placement and must travel with the child should they change placement.
- 42 On receipt of the **Philomena protocol** documents, the police will place a marker on the child's address and create a record on the system. This increases the speed of response should the child be subsequently reported missing.
- 43 An East Midlands Regional Protocol outlines regional local authority responsibilities for looked after children placed in the care of those within another local authority. This includes an agreement that the placing authority must comply with the host authority's children missing protocol. Where those agreements are not complied with then an escalation process is set out for those local authorities to follow.

Children with disabilities

- 44 Children with disabilities should be recognised as additionally vulnerable when they go missing; the impact of their additional needs on their level of understanding of risks should be considered and responded to appropriately.

F WHEN A CHILD GOES MISSING FROM HOME OR CARE

Child missing

Responsibility of ALL parents, carers, foster carers or residential staff

- 45 Parents, those with parental responsibility and anyone who has care of a child should take all reasonable steps to locate the missing child and ascertain their safety before reporting the child, whose whereabouts are unknown, to the Police. If safe to do so, they are expected to undertake the following basic measures to locate the missing child:
- Attempts to contact the child
 - Search the child's home - including bedroom/garden/outbuildings and any vehicles the child may have access to. Check to see if any items are missing from the home
 - Contact known friends or relatives where the child may be or consult with other members of the household or care staff
 - Seek information from social media used by the child, their friends, or associates
 - Visit locations the child is known to frequent, or where they have previously been found (If there are safety concerns regarding an address consider requesting police assistance to prevent a breach of the peace. Justification of why police attendance is needed will be required)
- 46 Once the basic measures are completed it is expected the police will be informed without delay. If there are any serious concerns for the safety of the child at any stage the Police should be informed immediately.
- 47 All parents, carers, foster carers and residential staff should continue to actively visit possible locations of the child and continue to contact family and associates of the child while the child is missing, and any information should be passed to the police.
- 48 Parents and carers of children living at home will not necessarily be aware of these steps and may need informing for future eventualities.
- 49 In accordance with the Department for Education and APP guidance, professionals should not give parents the impression they should not 'bother' the police or other professionals if their child goes missing regularly. Repeatedly going missing can indicate, for example, child sexual or criminal exploitation. Where parents or carers do not report the child or young person, or there is a significant delay, this may be an indicator of concern and their parenting or caring capacity and their ability to safeguard the child may need to be considered.

Additional considerations by residential staff or foster carers

- 50 Residential staff or foster carers need to decide whether the child is missing or away from the placement without authorisation (see Section B for definitions and Section J for further details). If the child's whereabouts has been verified, there is no known risk and efforts are being made to return the child to their placement then it may not be necessary to report the child as missing to the police. If the whereabouts of the child has not been adequately verified, the process outlined above should be followed and the child should be reported as missing to the police. **Please refer to Appendix 'A' for details that the Police will require.** The child's care plan and risk assessment should be considered. If there are serious concerns for the safety of the child, then the police should be informed immediately.
- 51 If the child has been identified as being at risk of going missing, part 2 of the Philomena protocol document must be completed by the child's carer, and copies of the child's Philomena protocol document (part 1) must be made ready for sharing with the police. Where the child has not been reported as missing to the police this should be kept under review. A written record of the incident and decision making should be maintained. For those children in a residential care setting the decision to report the child missing to the Police should be taken following consultation with the Registered Manager or the duty manager. Where this is not possible the senior member of staff on duty will make this decision.

Considerations by educational settings

- 52 Truancing should NOT be routinely dealt with as a missing person investigation. Education should consider the circumstances behind any report of truancing to determine if there are any indications that an investigation is warranted. Unauthorised absences could indicate a child is at risk and any concerns should be shared with partners and investigated where appropriate.

Educational Services should:

- Refer to their own educational setting Attendance and Safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Risk assess a situation where a child leaves the premises.
- If the child is considered to be at immediate risk of harm, then the Police are to be called immediately. Please refer to Appendix 'A' for details that the Police will need to know.
- If the child is not at immediate risk school should contact parents to inform them their child has left the school premises and request they make efforts to locate the child and continue communication with school until the child is found. School and parents can then continue to risk assess and give consideration to a Police

response. Professionals involved with the child should be notified.

- If parents are not contactable or dismissive, school should make reasonable efforts to locate the child, attempt to contact emergency contacts and make a judgement as to whether a Police response is required, discussing with professionals involved.

Role of Nottinghamshire Police – screening and monitoring

- 53 All reports to Nottinghamshire Police of a child whose whereabouts becomes unknown, will be risk assessed at the point of call by Control Room Staff (CRS) to determine whether the child is deemed 'missing'.
- 54 The CRS will ask the parent, staff member or carer a series of questions to assist in a risk assessment and decision-making process. The informant should have the answers to the police questions prior to contacting the police. Refer to Appendix 'A' which is designed to aid parents, carers and care home staff reporting children missing.
- 55 The CRS will enquire whether the child has been previously identified as at risk of going missing and if the child is a looked after child, whether the Philomena Protocol documents have been completed.
- 56 There should be agreement between the parties regarding the appropriate status of the incident and disagreements should be escalated to a supervisor without delay, however, the immediate decision rests with the Police. For those children who regularly go missing or are away from the placement without authorisation, staff should not be given the impression they should not 'bother' the police and the missing behaviour should not be normalised. This ethos is consistent with the approach in the Department for Education and the APP guidance. Repeatedly going missing could, for example, indicate a risk of exploitation.
- 57 Responses to these questions, and details of the incident, will be recorded on the police system and an incident type of 'Missing' including risk level will be assigned if the child is assessed as missing.
- 58 The priorities of Nottinghamshire Police are:
- To locate the child as SAFELY and as quickly as possible
 - To ensure that every report of a missing person is risk assessed so that those who may be vulnerable or are at a high risk of harm are immediately identified
 - To investigate reports of missing persons
 - To adopt a pro-active multi-agency approach in dealing with missing persons

- To support the needs of the family, those close to the missing person, and the community.

Nottinghamshire Police Risk Assessment

59 As per the College of Policing APP guidelines, all reports of missing people sit within a continuum of Risk, from 'no apparent risk,' through to high-risk cases that require immediate, intensive action. However, within Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City, it is agreed, that a missing child will ordinarily be assessed as being at **MEDIUM** risk of harm or above. Occasionally a child may be assessed as being at **LOW** risk following a review by the control room supervisor but only after a THRIVE risk assessment has been conducted and detailed rationale recorded.

60 When assessing the risk posed to a missing child, the CRS will consider:

- The antecedents of the child including any partnership information available
- The presenting circumstances and any reasonably foreseeable risks
- Any mental or physical impairments which might impact on the child's level of development, functioning, understanding or appreciation of risk

61 The outcome of this risk assessment will guide the police response and the nature of the enquiries undertaken.

Missing person's investigation

62 Nottinghamshire Police will conduct a reasonable and proportionate investigation in to the whereabouts of a missing child. The nature, scale and pace of any investigation will be consistent with the risk assessment (see below table) and will adhere to the Nottinghamshire Police "Missing Persons Policy" which in turn is guided by the College of Policing "Missing Persons" APP and National best practice.

The risk assessment framework used by Nottinghamshire Police will be as follows:

Low Risk

Definition	Response
<p>The risk of harm to the subject or the public is assessed as possible but minimal.</p> <p>Essential criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the circumstances out of character? • Does the context suggest the person may be subject to crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another? 	<p>Actions to locate the subject and/or gather further information should be agreed with the informant and a latest review time set to reassess the risk.</p> <p>An Officer will NOT be deployed to Missing Low risk. There must be regular contact with the informant in order to establish if there is any new information or factors affecting concern, risk. When the subject returns, a prevention interview will NOT be conducted unless there is information causing concern.</p> <p>Missing Low risk will be managed by the force control room.</p> <p>The Force Control Room Sergeant or above will review at 6 hours, the incident is then re-far'd for a further 5.5 hours. This process repeats every 6 hours for up-to a maximum of 72 Hours.</p> <p>The assessment of risk is ongoing, should new information alter the current risk assessment, the incident can be upgraded at any time for officer attendance.</p>
<p>Missing Low risk will not be used in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children 13 years and under • Any person recorded on the ALWAYS MISSING list (refer to GI pages) - The list is CONFIDENTIAL to Notts police. • Any child at risk of/experiencing child exploitation • An unaccompanied asylum-seeking child (UASC) 	

Medium risk

Definition	Response
<p>The risk of harm to the subject or the public is assessed as likely but not serious.</p> <p>Essential criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are the circumstances out of character?• Does the context suggest the person may be subject to crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another?• The Risk posed is likely to place subject or public in danger. <p>Assessment of whether the risk is serious should be compared to the home office definition of serious harm as outlined below.</p>	<p>This category requires an active and measured response by the police and other agencies in order to trace the missing person and support the person reporting.</p>

High risk

Definition	Response
<p>The risk of serious harm to the subject or the public is assessed as very likely.</p> <p>Essential criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are the circumstances out of character?• Does the context suggest the person may be subject to crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another?• The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the subject is in danger through their own vulnerability; or may have been the victim of a serious crime; or the risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger.	<p>This category almost always requires the immediate deployment of police resources.</p>

Role of the Police - if the incident is categorised as 'Missing (high/medium risk)'

- 63 A police officer will be deployed to attend all incidents where a child is deemed to be 'Missing – High/Medium risk'. They will commence a missing person investigation, in line with APP Missing Persons guidance and force procedure. The nature of the police response will be dependent on the level of risk assigned to the missing incident (High/Medium risk – as defined in the table below).
- 64 A missing report will be created on the police missing persons system.
- 65 For 'Missing' incidents, a notification is sent via secure email to the Children Missing Officer (CMO) in Nottinghamshire County Council or the Missing Children's Team in Nottingham City depending on the address from which the child went missing. The notification to the CMO/The Missing Children's Team will identify the level of risk as initially assessed by the CRS or attending Police Officer.

Role of the Police - if the incident is categorised as 'Missing – Low risk'

- 66 A police officer will NOT be deployed to attend an incident when a child is deemed to be 'Missing – Low risk' by the police. The onus will be on multi-agency partners to respond appropriately.
- 67 Following discussion with the informant, the CRS will agree additional actions the informant will take to help find the child and a time frame within which the informant should call back / be contacted by the police.
- 68 In follow-up contact with the informant, the CRS should determine if there is any change to the circumstances which increases the risk; if so then escalation to 'Missing' (High/Medium risk) status should be considered and the advice of a supervisor sought without delay.
- 69 'Missing – low risk' cases must be subject to robust re- assessment and review by the appropriate Control Room Inspector at six hourly intervals. A 'Missing – low risk' incident may be re-classified as 'Missing' (High/Medium risk) as a result of these reviews, or when new information comes to light that raises the level of risk of the incident. A police officer will then be deployed to take a missing person report. No child will remain categorised as 'Missing – low risk' for more than 72 hours; at that point the incident will be deemed as 'Missing' (High/Medium risk).
- 70 If an incident is escalated from 'Missing – low risk' to 'Missing -High/Medium risk, a COMPACT missing person report will be created, and the processes described above will apply. The child will become the subject of a multi-agency meeting if

they have been Missing for more than 72 hours. The multi-agency meeting should include the lead police officer/staff and the relevant LA team manager by 72 hours or earlier as appropriate. Where the child is not allocated to a service there should be a referral to the MASH in the County or the Children's Social Care duty officer in the City. A strategy meeting may be required depending on the level of concern or risk.

71 Upon the return of a child classified as 'Missing - low risk', an Officer will not be deployed to complete a prevention interview unless there is information causing concern. The CRS should ask the informant the following questions and record their answers in detail:

- 1) Date and Time the person returned.
- 2) Where has the person been whilst missing and who have they been with?
- 3) Did the person suffer any risk of harm whilst missing? Consider their appearance, behaviour etc.
- 4) Was the person involved in any criminal activity as the offender whilst they were missing?
- 5) Have you got any cause for concern? Is there any other relevant information?

Police risk assessment of missing child reports

72 On attending a 'Missing – High/Medium risk' child incident, a police officer will undertake a risk assessment to determine the level of police response. This will be based on their assessment of the circumstances and on information provided by the parent/carer or other professional who has reported the child as missing. If the child is looked after by the Local Authority and has previously been identified as being at risk of going missing, a Philomena protocol form will be supplied by the carer to the police officer. It is important that as much information as possible is shared with the police officer. Absence of information, for whatever reason, should not lead to an assumption the child is safe and well.

73 Throughout the missing person investigation, Nottinghamshire Police are responsible for ongoing enquiries, risk assessments and proportionate actions. They will seek good communication and close cooperation with the Local Authority and relevant agencies to ensure any significant concern or information is identified and shared at an early stage.

74 Where a missing notification is initially assessed as a medium risk by Police but then escalates to a high risk, the Police will notify the Children Missing Officer (CMO) in Nottinghamshire County Council or the Missing Children's Team in Nottingham City.

Role of the Police - Media Strategy

- 75 Where appropriate a media strategy may be necessary. The police will coordinate this; where a young person is looked after, the relevant senior managers as well as those with parental responsibility will be consulted and permission sought. The decisions around media appeals need to be made in a timely manner. In rare cases where there is an immediate risk or if it is evidenced that decisions are not made in a timely manner, the police can make the decision to publicise a media appeal. Liaison with the Local Authority media officer is important.

Role of Police – Social Media

- 76 Police routinely use social media to trace and contact missing children. Permission is sought from parents for children missing from home and from the Local Authority for children missing from care. The use of social media and uploading children's photographs will be proportionate with due regard given to potential risks.

Role of Children's Social Care

- 77 Upon receipt of a notification from the Police of a Missing report, the CMO (County) and The Missing Children's Team (City) will check against Mosaic and Liquid Logic to ascertain additional risks identified for the child and liaise with the Police to aid the re-evaluation of the risk level initially applied if required.
- 78 The CMO (County) and The Missing Children's Team (City) apply the joint inter-agency practice guidance in respect of whether or not a return home interview, multi- agency meeting or a referral to Children's Social Care (CSC) for a Strategy Discussion is required. In the first instance, the CMO (County) and The Missing Children's Team (City) checks notifications against Mosaic and Liquid Logic to ascertain whether the young person is an open case to CSC or Early Help (City). Where open, the notification will be forwarded to the relevant worker with the request for a return home interview or multi-agency meeting, as appropriate. In the City, the Missing Children's Team complete the return home interviews where appropriate.
- 79 Where a young person is not open to a service but there are concerns of a Child Protection nature, contact will be made with CSC for a discussion about whether or not the threshold for CSC intervention is met. The result of these discussions will determine which service will undertake the return home interview.
- 80 For missing children, the CMO or The Missing Children's Team will apply the Pathway to Provision - Multi-Agency Thresholds Guidance to support the decision making in terms of the threshold for their service (Tier 3).

- 81 Where the child is not open to a service, the notification will be passed to the Family Service in the County or remain with The Missing Children's Team in the City for the completion of a return home interview unless there are concerns of a Child Protection nature; in which case the above process of contact with CSC would apply.
- 82 For the Family Service or other Targeted Family Support cases, the CMO or The Missing Children's Team will send the request via e-mail; for CSC allocated cases the request will go direct to the social worker via the MOSAIC task system as appropriate in the County and dependant on where the child is residing will either remain with The Missing Children's Team or be passed to the appropriate team for completion in the City.
- 83 If the case is not open to any services, and there is no requirement for a return home interview or multi-agency meeting (MAM), the information will be stored on MOSAIC or Liquid Logic as appropriate with no further action recorded.
- 84 Where the Police notify the CMO (County) or The Missing Children's Team (City) of any High risk or increased Missing risk, the CMO (County) or The Missing Children's Team (City) will widen searches to establish any further links with known family members and any additional leads including with other Local Authorities and education services. This information will be provided to the Police including details of any previous referrals and an overall summary.

Role of Health

- 85 The CMO (County) or The Missing Children's Team (City) will advise relevant Health professionals for the child, this should include the 0 -19 services and Children in Care Nursing team (if the child is Looked After) of missing children who will review the information and health records. If a health professional identifies any concerning medical information such as a condition requiring essential medications or treatments, they should inform the CMO (County) or The Missing Children's Team (City) as soon as possible as this may affect the risk associated to the missing child.
- 86 Health professionals will be notified by the lead professional for the child when a multi-agency meeting is required. Children's Social Care will ensure the appropriate health professionals, including the GP, are invited to the multi-agency meeting.

Return of the child

- 87 Relevant agencies should have a plan in place for when the child is found or returns

home.

- 88 It is the responsibility of the parent or carer to contact the police as soon as possible to confirm the missing child has returned where this occurs without police involvement. If their whereabouts is known or suspected, it is the responsibility of the parents or carers to collect the child and return them home. The police assist with such transportation in exceptional circumstances or acknowledged risk to the parent/carer.
- 89 If there are concerns about abuse or harm where the young person lives then the police and/or children's social care may initiate actions to protect the child.

Emergency Accommodation

- 90 Any young person who has been missing and is not able to return home may be able to access emergency accommodation following an assessment of the situation by a social worker.
- 91 In circumstances where the police have taken immediate action to protect a child the Local Authority will need to determine what type of accommodation is appropriate and will not add to any level of risk or vulnerability. The use of bed and breakfast accommodation (B&B) is not considered suitable for any child under the age of 18yrs even on an emergency basis. Sixteen and seventeen year olds may require an assessment of need and may need to be accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989.

Police Prevention Interviews

Missing from home

- 92 Once a missing child has been located the Police will carry out a Prevention Interview in person. The purpose is to check for any indication they have suffered harm, where and with whom they have been and to give them the opportunity to disclose any offending by or against them. This will result in the police closing the missing report on COMPACT and a notification is automatically generated for the Local Authority to review and action appropriately.
- 93 If the Police Officer has any significant safeguarding concerns at the time, they conduct the Prevention Interview they will contact the child's social worker, if allocated, or make a referral to Children's Social Care (County – MASH and City – Children and Families Direct) and out of hours to the Emergency Duty Teams.

Missing from care

- 94 When a child frequently goes missing from care in a short period of time, e.g. several times in **one week**, it may not be possible, or appropriate, for police officers to undertake a prevention interview on every occasion. In these cases, officers can take a full telephone debrief from the person responsible for the child's care (residential unit manager or foster carer) to assure themselves the child has returned and update the COMPACT 'found' report accordingly.
- 95 Caution should be taken if there is any suggestion the child is running away from something occurring in the care setting.
- 96 The Prevention Interview conducted by the police is NOT the same as a return home interview which will be conducted by another appropriately trained independent professional.
- 97 The Local Authority is responsible for deciding whether or not a return home interview is conducted in line with the protocol.

Away from placement without authorisation

- 98 If the Police are notified about a child who is 'away from placement without authorisation', the specific concern about the child must be reported. The child will not be considered as missing if they are at a known address. A prevention interview by the Police is not required for those children who have been deemed to be 'away from placement without authorisation' though a return home interview may be offered.

Welcome Home

- 99 Parents and carers should be advised of the importance of children returning home to a warm and genuine welcome and being made aware the adult has been concerned for them. While making sure there is no urgent health or other need, it is not best practice to immediately question the young person. Adopting a non-judgmental approach is helpful. The child should be offered something to eat and drink and allowed space and to sleep if they wish.
- 100 If there is any concern the young person has been the victim of a crime, or is at risk arising from being missing, the police will instigate further enquiries, for example take clothing, mobile phones or trace evidence. In cases of recent sexual abuse or sexual exploitation the child should be discouraged from washing. Any evidence or intelligence should be shared with the police as a matter of urgency. Workers should follow safeguarding children procedures relating to child protection

and child sexual exploitation as appropriate.

G POLICE NOTIFICATIONS

Receipt of missing children notifications from the Police (via COMPACT)

- 101 The police system will generate automatic missing and found notifications to a secure e-mail account in Children's Social Care, the CMO/The Missing Children's Team will process this from Monday to Friday. Notifications following weekends and bank holidays will be picked up on the next working day. For any urgent or child protection issues arising from a missing episode the police will make a referral to the emergency duty service. This will trigger contact with and involvement from partner agencies, including health and education.
- 102 Cover arrangements are in place for any absence of the CMO/The Missing Children's Team or the police missing coordinators.
- 103 All notifications will be processed, in a consistent manner, by the CMO/The Missing Children's Team the same working day.
- 104 The CMO/The Missing Children's Team applies the protocol in respect of whether or not a return home interview, multi-agency meeting, or a referral to CSC for a strategy discussion is required. The CMO/The Missing Children's Team checks all notifications against the relevant client record system to ascertain whether the child is an open case to children's social care or targeted support services in the County or City.

Receipt of Missing – Low Risk notifications

- 105 'Missing – Low Risk' notifications will be forwarded to the CMO/The Missing Children's Team, within a maximum of five days, by the police missing person's coordinator in line with the Information Sharing Agreement. The aim is for this information to be shared as soon as possible. Timeliness is important as there is an onus on other agencies to respond to the missing report deemed 'Missing – Low Risk'.

H RETURN HOME INTERVIEW

What is a return home interview?

106 A return home interview is an opportunity to discover information to help protect the child from going missing again, to reduce the instances of going missing and to reduce risks they may have been exposed to while missing or in their home.

107 The interview, and actions that follow, should:

- a. Identify and respond to any harm the child has suffered (this may or may not have been disclosed as part of the 'safe and well check') either before they ran away or while missing.
- b. To understand and try to address the reasons why the child ran away.
- c. To understand who they were with when missing and where they were found.
- d. To understand what future risk there is of going missing.
- e. Help the child feel safe and to understand they have options to prevent or reduce repeat instances of running away.
- f. Provide the child with information on how to stay safe if they choose to run away again, including helpline numbers.
- g. Identify the support, in the form of a plan of action, the child requires on returning home or to their care placement.

108 The interview should be held in a neutral place where the child feels safe.

109 The template for the Nottingham city missing person return home interview is attached at appendix D. The Mosaic Nottinghamshire return home interview form is built into MOSAIC

When should a return home interview be undertaken?

110 A return home interview will be offered when a child is found after having been reported as missing and assessed as 'Missing' by the Police.

111 A return home interview should be offered where a child is suspected or confirmed to have been missing and not reported to the authorities ('hidden missing') but comes to the attention of services.

112 If a child goes missing frequently then arrangements for the completion of return interviews should be discussed with the children missing officer/team. If a child goes missing several times in one week, then it may be that only one return interview is required per week unless Police or partner information indicates otherwise.

113 Where children refuse to engage with the independent interviewer, parents and carers should be offered the opportunity to provide any relevant information and

intelligence of which they may be aware. This should help to prevent further instances of the child running away and identify early the support needed for them.

Who should undertake the return home interview?

- 114 Return home interviews should be undertaken by an independent person who has sufficient knowledge and skill of working with children. It should not be someone involved in caring for the child; residential care staff or foster carers should not undertake the return home interview.
- 115 Children may need to build trust with a person before they will discuss in depth the reasons they ran away. The young person may nominate someone they would like to talk to though it should not be someone involved in their day to day care. Where there is social work involvement it is hoped the child will have a positive relationship and wish to engage with their social care team but if this is not the case then the child's social worker should identify an appropriate professional who has a positive relationship with the child to conduct the interview. Children in care should be offered the choice of speaking to a representative or advocate who is independent of their placement or the responsible local authority.
- 116 Where a social worker or other statutory worker is involved, they will be responsible for ensuring the return home interview is completed within timescales and for liaising with any person who may be undertaking the interview with the child.

Good practice for completing return home interviews

- 117 A good return home interview can help understand and address the reasons why a child has run away; it can identify harm; help the child feel safe; provide them with information on how to stay safe; and allow professionals to identify actions to help them. The child must feel safe and comfortable with the interviewer to be able to share difficult information with them. As such, consider which professional involved with the child would be best placed to complete the return home interview. This could be a youth worker, youth justice worker, teacher/tutor etc but his person must not be involved in caring for the child.
- 118 The following steps will help you to undertake a successful return home interview:
- **Arrange to hold the interview in a neutral place** where the child feels safe, if possible. If you have to conduct the interview at home, it is important that you speak to the young person alone, but also make sure you give parents or carers space to talk about their concerns.

- **Turn up on time** - you said you cared when you phoned – but don't be surprised if they have forgotten they are meeting you or don't want to talk to you now.
- **Your conversation** needs to be caring, creative, conversational and courageous to develop a sharing culture and relationship - use child friendly discussion techniques.
- **Be friendly and listen** to how they want to proceed. It is important to ensure that they feel they can talk to you in the future; some young people run away frequently and may be referred to your service again.
- **Have a problem free conversation with them first** before you start taking notes - you need to form a trusting relationship.
- **Try to identify the reasons the child gives for going missing or running away**
 - Was this the first time the child went missing or has it happened before?
 - Did the child go alone or with others? Were they persuaded to go by someone else?
 - Did they try to resolve the problem before it caused them to run away and if so, why didn't this work?
 - Does the problem/trigger still exist?
- **Where did the child go or stay** - How did they get access to food, money, transport, clothing, etc? Did they get involved in criminal activity? Did they seek or need medical help?
- **Did they get help from anyone** while they were missing – did they enter into any relationship, particularly if it made them feel uncomfortable? Were they harmed or at risk of harm from other people?
- **How did they feel** – did they feel physically and mentally healthy? Did they feel bullied or pressured? Were there signs of stress, depression or self-harm? Were they involved in substance misuse? What led them to return or be found? How did they feel about returning?
- **Persistence is right, insistence is not.** A return home interview is voluntary and some young people will refuse to talk to you the first few times they are referred. If you show you will keep offering, eventually most will want a return visit.
- **Put a plan in place to address any issues identified during the return home interview.** Always tell the child what you plan to do with what they have told you.
- **Assess** whether they might run away again and identify any immediate or long-term follow-up support such as counselling or a police referral.
- **Tell them what you will do** and agree what you will feed back to professionals, or their parents/ carers, if it isn't a safeguarding concern.
- **Confidentiality** - If a young person has disclosed something, they need to be reminded that you will pass this on if it is a concern. Do not break confidentiality without agreement. Talk through any consequences of sharing information with you and get agreement.
- **Be clear to the young person about the limitations of your support from**

now on, while also being clear on how they can reach you if they need to.

Sharing of information from return home interviews with Police

- 119 During the course of a return home interview, a child may provide information to assist in quickly locating them should they go missing again and preventing future harm for themselves and others. For example, locations visited, who they associated with, vehicles they travelled in, etc. **The professional responsible for the completion of the return home interview, while not sharing the whole return home interview, is required to feedback key information to the relevant police missing person coordinator in a timely manner.**
- 120 A secure police e-mail is also available to enable the sharing of relevant child specific significant information outside of this process.

missingpersons@notts.police.uk

Sharing of information from return home interviews with residential care homes

- 121 Upon completion of return home interviews, any relevant risk information such as names of individuals mentioned, locations visited, license plate details of suspected perpetrators etc should be shared with the child's residential care home by the child's social care team, however, the return home interview document should not be routinely shared in its entirety with residential care homes. Young people should feel confident that information they share about their missing incident is not shared in full with those involved in caring for them where reasons for their missing incident are related to the care in which they are receiving.

Timescales

- 122 Return home interviews should be completed within 72 hours; if this is not possible due to reluctance of the child or due to the report being made on a weekend/bank holiday then initial contact can be made within 72 hours and an appointment made in the next few days. There will be occasions when the worker will need to be persistent though not insistent in engaging with the child to undertake the return home interview. The aim is for all return home interviews to be completed within five working days.

Interview Refused

- 123 When a child has refused to participate in a return home interview, as much information as possible should be gathered during the refusal discussion and

recorded appropriately. This may involve sharing intelligence with the police. If the child initially refused and the discussion evolved into a meaningful dialogue, allowing the return home interview to be completed, this should be completed in the usual manner and explained to the child. Details of the missing incident should be sought from the child's parent or carers; this is particularly significant where the child does not wish to engage in the return home interview process.

- 124 When a child refuses to engage and there remains concern (from available intelligence or information) about their vulnerability and there is no CSC involvement, this may need to be sought if the threshold is met.

Parental involvement

- 125 While it is important to talk to parents, it is important to speak to the child on their own. Where appropriate, competent older children can consent to being spoken to, perhaps at school.
- 126 When parents refuse to engage with the process or refuse consent for the child to be spoken to, depending on the circumstances and should the resistance persist, their capacity to safeguard their child may need to be considered.

I THE RESPONSE - ENGAGEMENT AND PLANNING

Engagement

- 127 As a result of information or intelligence from the police or the child, there should be a plan to address the reasons for the missing or away from the placement without authorisation incident. Where appropriate this may include child protection or children in need processes.
- 128 The plan may identify work needed by a variety of statutory or non-statutory agencies or organisations, including the voluntary sector. There is an onus on agencies to work together to support and safeguard the child.

Planning

Multi-Agency Meeting (MAM)

- 129 A multi-agency meeting is an opportunity for agencies, including health and education, to understand why the child has gone missing, to take action as agreed and to plan to reduce or stop the missing notifications and the level of risk. When determining whether a multi-agency meeting is required, consideration should be given to the risk of a child or young person going missing again and be based on available information about:
- Their individual circumstances.
 - Their motivation for running away.
 - Their potential destinations and associates.
 - Their recent pattern of absences.
 - The circumstances in which they were found previously.
 - Their individual characteristics and risk factors such as whether a child has learning difficulties, mental health issues or other vulnerabilities.
- 130 A multi-agency meeting is to be held within 15 working days when:
- A child has been missing three times in 90 days.
 - A child has been missing or absent for 72 hours but has returned.
 - There is other information to suggest there is a high level of risk or professional information sharing and co-ordination is required.
 - Where the child continues to be away from their placement without authorisation.
- 131 These meetings should be organised and chaired by a social worker or team manager depending on the level of concern or complexity, with a brief summary of

the meeting and actions required and the record of who attended the meeting (and apologies or was invited but did not attend) should be recorded on the child's case file. Attendees should be notified of the meeting in advance and if the police are unable to attend, they should agree to provide a telephone conversation or report. Video conferencing should also be utilised if appropriate.

- 132 It is possible where appropriate to incorporate a multi-agency meeting under this guidance into, for example a Child Sexual Exploitation Meeting, Child Criminal Exploitation Meeting, EHAF Meeting, Child in Need meeting, Core Group Meeting or similar. To enable a clear focus on the missing issues this should be a clear agenda item with a summary of the discussion and actions for each agency recorded on the child's file. This should be made available to the Children Missing Officer/Missing Children's Team to enable compliance to be recorded.
- 133 Where the young person is not open to Children's Social Care and multi-agency information shared suggests the Children's Social Care threshold has been reached then the case should be referred to Children's Social Care in the usual manner.
- 134 Where there is non-engagement from agencies or disagreement regarding planned actions and responsibilities this should be escalated using the Safeguarding Children Partnership escalation procedure.

Persistent or Lengthy Missing or absent episodes

Missing 72 hours or more

- 135 When a child has been missing for 72 hours from the time reported to the police, the team manager for the child will chair a multi-agency meeting with the Police Officer supervising the case, or their nominee, the appropriate social worker or case workers, education (current provider), health (0-19 services/Children in Care Nursing team or Safeguarding Paediatrician if known injury/sexual health concerns) and with other involved agencies. The purpose of this meeting is to establish the ongoing level of risk and coordinate efforts to locate the child and put in place robust plans for their return.
- 136 Where the child is not open to Children's Social Care, a MASH enquiry should be submitted in the County or a referral to Child and Family Direct in the City followed by a strategy discussion between the Assessment Team (relevant managers) in the County or Missing Children's Team or Duty Team in the City with the police, the appropriate social worker or case workers, education (current provider), health (0-19 services/Children in Care Nursing team or Safeguarding Paediatrician if known injury/sexual health concerns) and with other involved

agencies to determine if the threshold for Children's Social Care involvement is met for an immediate response/S47 investigation.

- 137 The police will drive the enquiries in relation to finding the child and there will need to be active engagement with the workers involved and professionals from other agencies.
- 138 Where the child is either subject to a Child Protection Plan or Looked After by the Local Authority, the Group Manager and Service Director in the County and the relevant Head of Service and Director of Integrated Children's Services in the City should be notified the child is missing or absent within 24 hours with a subsequent update at 72 hours or earlier as determined by professional judgment.
- 139 The Group Manager for Children's Social Care in the County and the relevant Head of Service in the City should be made aware of any Child in Need (CiN) young person who remains missing after 72 hours at the latest or earlier as determined by professional judgment.
- 140 Where a child has been missing for 28 days, the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) responsible for the case, or their nominee, will meet with senior managers from relevant agencies to review the Police investigation and co-ordinate a multi-agency response and support plan for the child upon their return. Children's Social Care should chair and co-ordinate the 28-day multi-agency meeting and agreement is required at this meeting as to an on-going review process in line with other statutory processes and procedures. The chair of this meeting should set a date for review where required.

Ongoing Monitoring for Persistent Missing or Absence

- 141 Regular multi-agency meetings should be held to review the plan of intervention. The frequency will need to be agreed but six weekly may be appropriate. These cases are likely to come to the attention of the monthly 'Multiple Missing and Hot Spots' meeting.
- 142 For looked after children who go missing persistently, the missing behaviour should also be discussed at LAC reviews and with the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) as appropriate.

Recording of activity

- 143 All agencies are responsible for recording information on their agency records, including any management decisions.

Police Powers

- 144 The Police have powers to protect vulnerable children, including powers to enter premises, to recover children and to place them under Police Protection if they remaining in their current situation would leave them exposed to, or place them at risk of significant harm.

Child Abduction Warning Notices

- 145 The Police can issue Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWNs) on adults associating with a child and who may pose a risk to them, in order to disrupt the relationship. The consent of the person who has parental responsibility for the child is required. If there is a dispute around the decision making of whether to issue a CAWN then professionals involved should meet to discuss the information available.

J ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Looked after Children - Away from placement without authorisation

- 146 Staff should inform the child's social worker and the Children Missing Officer/Missing Children's Team of a child away from placement without authorisation. The IRO should be made aware of the event by the social worker.
- 147 The children's missing officer/team will advise if a return home interview is required.
- 148 Children's homes and foster carers should keep a record of the names of the children and the dates and times they are away from the placement without authorisation and ensure timely reporting to the CMO/The Missing Children's Team.
- 149 Incidents of children away from their placement without authorisation do NOT need to be reported to the police. In exceptional circumstances if police assistance is needed to recover the child i.e. where there are concerns for the safety of staff or the child, police assistance can be sought. The police will record this incident as 'assist other agencies' as opposed to recording the matter as linked to the child going missing.

Prevention and Planning

- 150 The quality of care provided by care staff or foster carers, and the stability of the placement, is key to preventing a child going missing. Planning in advance of placements being made is also a key aim where possible. Children should be placed in the most appropriate placement available; this should be in their local area unless this is not compatible with their needs. Distance from home is a key factor in preventing looked after children running away. One of the most important factors for children is having a sense they are listened to, taken seriously and cared for and that carers are not 'just doing their job'.
- 151 In addition to the above, the following points should be borne in mind:
- The care plan should assess the potential risks of going missing and record the degree and level of risk, the child and the parent's views.
 - An initial risk assessment should be completed and held on the child's file, considering their age, vulnerability, legal status etc. This should be reviewed and/or updated regularly following each missing episode.
 - Carers should agree how they and others will respond to particular behaviours and how to be proactive in managing these.
 - Carers should have copies of photographs of the child, preferably in

electronic format.

- Patterns of going missing should be considered.
- An understanding of why they are going missing is important in trying to address the reasons or problems.
- It is vital to plan for the child's return during the time they are missing / absent.
- At each Children's Social Care meeting, for example LAC reviews, there should be a discussion about missing issues. The review of a care plan is an opportunity to address the reasons why a child is going missing and the suitability of the placement etc.
- Independent Reviewing Officers should be informed of missing, absences and away from placement without authorisation events.
- Other agencies should have an opportunity to contribute to the planning around missing or away from placement without authorisation instances.

152 When a Looked After Child is first assessed as at risk of going missing, Part 1 of the Philomena Protocol (See Appendix B) should be completed by the social worker, in discussion with the child and their carers. The Philomena protocol forms must be regularly updated: at a minimum following a change of placement and must travel with the child should they change placement. These documents collate information which may be useful in locating the child should they then go missing. including:

- Relevant medical information.
- Names and addresses of where the child may go to when missing and where they have been found previously.

Looked After Children trafficked from abroad

153 Some looked after children are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) or other migrant children and some may have been trafficked into the UK and remain under the influence of their traffickers. Trafficked children remain at high risk of going missing, most within one week of becoming LAC. Those UASC or migrant children who do go missing in this way should be treated as potential victims of trafficking. See the NSCP procedure for safeguarding children who may have been trafficked (2017).

http://nottinghamshirescb.proceduresonline.com/p_trafficked_ch.html?zoom_highlight=trafficked+children as well as Home Office guidance.

154 In the first instance, an UASC who is considered to be missing should be reported to Immigration Enforcement unless there is an immediate risk to life where the Police need to be contacted.

155 Cooperation with the UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHCT) will be necessary and the NSPCC Child Trafficking Centre also provides specialist advice. Phone 0808 800 5000 or e-mail help@nspcc.org.uk or web: [What You Need to Know About](#)

- 156 A referral should also be made to the UK's victim identification framework, the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). See web_ <http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/specialist-capabilities/uk-human-trafficking-centre/national-referral-mechanism>

Sixteen and seventeen year old children

- 157 Those 16 and 17 year olds who remain in care or are care leavers should be recognised as being equally vulnerable to going missing and prevention or response strategies are needed. They should be placed in suitable and safe accommodation and the protocol will still apply; this includes for those in supported accommodation.

Out of area Looked After Child (LAC) placements

- 158 For Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council looked after children who are placed in other local authority areas, the host local authority protocol should also be followed in conjunction with this NSCP/NCSCP protocol. Additionally, for Looked After Children with an assessed risk of going missing or at risk of child exploitation, the Philomena protocol documents should be completed and sent to host local authority's Missing team and Police Missing team. Further details around the responsibilities relating to looked after children can be found in Section K.
- 159 Where Nottingham City or Nottinghamshire County LAC children are placed out of the area, there is a requirement in the contracts that their placement provider will notify the responsible authority CMO/The Missing Children's Team with details of children who are at risk of going missing as most police forces do not have the facility to send automatic notifications to local authorities outside their own police force boundaries. There is a requirement on the children's social workers to ensure the CMO/The Missing Children's Team is aware of the missing event as soon as possible.

County

- 160 At the point children are placed in out of county placements, the Placements Team will notify the CMO who will liaise with the placement provider (where the children are of an appropriate age) to ensure that they know to make the CMO aware of any missing or absent events. The Placements Team monitor the quality of the provision incorporating missing issues.

City

161 The Placements Team quality assures the requirement that placement providers inform relevant parties of 'missing episodes'.

Other Local Authority (OLA) Looked After Children

162 Other local authority LAC missing notifications will be monitored by the CMO/The Missing Children's Team in the same manner as City or County children and notifications will be forwarded on to their respective placing authority.

163 The CMO/The Missing Children's Team will advise the appropriate Health professionals of OLA LAC missing notifications.

164 In both the County and the City, where it is not practical for the placing authority social worker to complete the return home interview, the services of a worker from the City or County will be approached; details of a 'sold' service will be made available for OLA children placed in the City or the County. The return home interview form or any other information resulting will be shared with the placing authority who will retain case management responsibility for all aspects of the case. The placing authority will be responsible for arranging any multi-agency meetings needed.

165 If any child protection processes need to be followed these should be discussed with the MASH in the County or Children and Families Direct in the City if the possible abuse took place within the City or County boundaries.

K STRATEGIC ISSUES

Accountability and Governance

The role of the Safeguarding Children Partnership

166 Part of their role the Safeguarding Children Partnership is to give due consideration to the safeguarding risks and issues associated with children missing from home or care. This will involve ensuring partners are working effectively to prevent children from going missing and to act when they do so. Both Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnerships will receive and scrutinise regular reports from the local authority on the data and analyses of children missing from home and care. They should review regular reports from children's homes used by the local authority or within the local authority area regarding the effectiveness of their measures to prevent children going missing.

In the County

167 The strategic safeguarding lead for Missing Children is with the Service Manager, Safeguarding Children (Strategic). Work is managed through a multi-agency steering group. An annual report goes to the NSCP with additional reporting on a quarterly basis to the NSCP Safeguarding, Assurance and Improvement Group. An annual report is presented to the Children and Young Person's Committee.

In the City

168 The strategic safeguarding leads for missing children work is with The Missing Children's Team Manager/CSE Coordinator and the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance and chair of the partnership missing sub-group. The work is managed through the NCSCP multi-agency sub-group which feeds into the BMG which reports to the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Prevention strategy

169 The premise of the strategy is that robust implementation of this protocol will prevent or reduce the number of children who go missing including the frequency of missing episodes. It is anticipated this will reduce the level of risk for these children. The key feature of this approach is that children who go missing will be spoken to and the reasons they go missing will be sought and understood. This will, in turn, attract a robust response from relevant agencies. For looked after children, a critical area is work around care planning and placement strategy and practice.

170 This prevention strategy includes a vigorous and thorough response to those children who are deemed to have been away from their placement without authorisation.

Repeat strategy

171 It is similarly intended that adherence to this protocol will ensure a robust and timely response to those children who continue to go missing (including those away from their placement without authorisation). The response will be multi-agency for example with a looked after child, including those who are involved in commissioning placements, Independent Reviewing Officers, health colleagues etc. The multiple missing and hot spots meeting will contribute to the challenge and scrutiny of repeat missing children. It is anticipated this approach will have an impact on the instances (and risks) of children going repeatedly missing or away from their placement without authorisation.

Monitoring and Data Analysis

The County

172 The CMO and the Service Manager, Safeguarding Children (Strategic) will collate monthly/quarterly/annual data in relation to all missing episodes, return home interviews and multi-agency meetings. The data will be shared with the missing children steering group and the NSCP on a quarterly basis and with relevant colleagues as required.

The City

173 The Missing Children's Team and administrator will collate data in relation to all missing episodes, return home interviews and multi-agency meetings. The data will be shared with the steering group and the NCSCP.

Monitoring hot spots and multiple missing young persons

174 A monthly multi-agency meeting of the City, County, Police, Health providers and other invitees as appropriate, will meet to consider the children who repeatedly go missing or cause concern in relation to their level of missing and to consider particular hot spot locations (locations of frequent reports to Police). See Appendix 'E' for Terms of Reference.

Department for Education returns

175 There is a requirement to collate data for children missing or away from their placement without authorisation from the responsible authority.

Hidden Missing

176 Agencies will consider those children who have not been reported to the police but come to their attention, these may be trafficked children for example or children who go missing from education.

177 The local authority and the police will aim to be pro-active in identifying where under-reporting may be happening.

L RESOURCES AND GUIDANCE

DfE (2014) Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care_-_3_.pdf

Home Office (2011) Missing Children and Adults: A Cross Government Strategy

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/117793/missing-persons-strategy.pdf

All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) Inquiry on Children Who Go Missing from Care (2012)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175563/Report_-_children_who_go_missing_from_care.pdf

The Children's Society – Lessons to Learn 2012

Exploring the links between running away and absence from school

http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/tcs/lessons-to-learn_final.pdf

CEOP resource area for child sexual

exploitation <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Ofsted report on CSE and missing (2016)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/491761/Child_sexual_exploitation_and_children_missing_from_home_care_or_education_ofsted_targeted_inspection_guidance.pdf

Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities (2016)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

Ofsted thematic inspection (2013)

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/missing-children>

Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations volumes on care planning and review

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/441643/Children_Act_Guidance_2015.pdf

Missing People – Children's views on being reported missing from care (2021)

[Childrens views on being reported missing from care.pdf](http://www.missingpeople.org.uk/childrens_views_on_being_reported_missing_from_care.pdf)
(missingpeople.org.uk)

The Children's Society Next Generation (2020)

[Next-Gen-Evaluation-Summary.pdf](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/next-gen-evaluation-summary.pdf) (childrenssociety.org.uk)

Children's Homes Regulations 2015

[The Children's Homes \(England\) Regulations 2015](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) (legislation.gov.uk)

Appendix A

Police Control Room: Missing Person Risk Assessment Questions:

1. Forename
2. Surname
3. Date of Birth
4. Ethnicity
5. Gender
6. Contact number
7. Description (Including Clothing)
8. Last seen date, time and location?
9. What is the specific concern in this instance?
10. What has been done so far to trace this individual?
11. List Information about any person who might have contact with the missing person, eg estranged parents, partners and friends.
12. Is this significantly out of character?
13. Absent from care
14. Disability
15. Any concerns/history of mental health or self-harm?
16. Are they likely to attempt suicide?

17. Are there any specific medical/ medication needs?

18. Any drug or alcohol abuse concerns?
19. Do they pose a danger to other people?
20. Are they likely to be a victim of crime/ abuse/ hurt or harmed?
21. Are they currently at risk of sexual exploitation?

22. Does the person have access to a vehicle?

23. Social media accounts and username/passwords?
24. Has the subject lived in another Force area?
25. Is there any other information relevant to their absence?
26. Is the child accommodated by social services?
27. if yes, is there a Philomena Protocol form?

PHILOMENA PROTOCOL

MISSING VULNERABLE YOUNG PERSON'S PROFILE

There may be important pieces of information that you can provide to the Police in the event that the person you are caring for goes missing. Try and have several copies of recent, close-up photographs of the person, this may help the Police when searching for them.

This form is interactive and can be completed and stored electronically. It should be updated regularly and part 2 fully completed in the event of a missing report.

PART 1 - (TO BE COMPLETED WHEN PLACEMENT OF CHILD INTO YOUR CARE)

Name: Full				<p>Please attach a recent photo here.</p> <p>Please find one that is up to date and a good likeness of the person.</p>
Preferred name:				
Date of birth:		Age:		
Ethnicity:				
Sex/Gender:				
<i>Current address:</i>				
<i>Postcode:</i>				

Details of Care Order:	
Social Worker name & contact details:	
Professionals working with the child eg Children's Society Volunteer Mentor	

Is the person open/known to a Child Exploitation Team (CSE/CCE)? - Provide details	
Summary of exploitation concerns	

Previous home addresses:	1.	
	2.	
	3.	

School/Educational Establishment attended:	Current School / Establishment –	
	Pastoral Lead -	
	Previous School / Establishment -	
	Pastoral Lead -	

Previous Missing From Home incident summary:	
Previous locations found: (Provide all recent information - List all locations)	
Significant dates - example birthdays of parents/deaths etc	
Significant places of interest	
Habits:	
Hobbies	

GP name and address:	
Health condition(s):	
Medication required:	

General description:	
Height:	
Weight:	
Build:	
Hair Colour:	
Eyes	
Jewellery	
General Appearance	
Distinguishing features: (e.g. scars/tattoos)	
Distinguishing features – tattoos/ birth marks/ piercings broken down <i>Feature/what it is/and where it is</i> (i.e. ear pierced/wears a gold stud/both ears OR Tattoo/dragon with heart/top of left leg)	

Has the person got any money?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	If so, How much?						
Has the person got a Bank Account:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Have you got access to this account? (If not who does?)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO					
Name of bank:		Sort Code:	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"><tr><td></td><td>-</td><td></td><td>-</td><td></td></tr></table>		-		-	
	-		-					
Acc No:		Do you hold the Password to access this account? (If not who does?)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO					

Has the person got a mobile phone?		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Number:		Network:	
Make		Model:	
IMEI Number:		Mac Address	

Is there a Find my Phone or other location app activated on this? – Provide details:

Does the person have any other form of Tracking Device? – Provide details:

Does the person have a bus / metrolink pass:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Provide details e.g Pass number and Issuer.	
Does the person have access to vehicle(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Provide details e.g Registration Number/ Driver etc.	

Does the person have a social Media Accounts (Provide Details):	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
Social Media Site			
Username			
Do you have the password:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	If YES, what is it?	

Social Media Site			
Username			
Do you have the password:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	If YES, what is it?	

Social Media Site			
Username			
Do you have the password:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	If YES, what is it?	

Social Media Site			
Username			
Do you have the password:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	If YES, what is it?	

Social Media Site			
Username			
Do you have the password:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	If YES, what is it?	

Risk assessed locations & contacts to assist in locating a missing young person.

This form should be updated regularly and any new associates & locations added as soon as you become aware of them.

Name of Child	Date Of Birth	Address

	Name	Address	Association	Telephone	Associated Risks
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					

It is the responsibility of the person/agency completing and the recipient to protect the information from theft and compromise.
This form and the information contained in it must be securely stored.

Part 2 – To be completed as soon as the person is reported missing

ACTION PLAN to be implemented before calling the Police

THE POLICE SHOULD NOT BE THE 1ST ACTION ON THE LIST UNLESS;

It is obvious that this incident should be treated as HIGH risk with potential for serious harm or the Child is suspected of being currently subjected to criminal or sexual offences. (Serious harm = Life threatening and/or traumatic from which recovery, whether physical or psychological can be expected to be difficult or impossible.)

In all other cases the person reporting should be able to evidence they have completed all the actions detailed in the Response Plan below before contacting the police.

1. Thoroughly search the building and immediate surrounding areas. (H/A and location last seen if different/appropriate.)
2. Try to contact the young person on their mobile. Activate Find My Phone/Tracker if applicable.
3. Check all known places of interest to the young person.
4. Contact all known family/relatives/friends if applicable.

If the child / young person's whereabouts are known they are NOT Missing:

The young person is absent from home without permission and the Police do not need to be notified unless there is a genuine "concern for welfare".

PART 2 - (TO BE COMPLETED AS SOON AS THE PERSON IS REPORTED AS MISSING – DO NOT DELAY REPORTING TO POLICE TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION)

Description of what the person was last seen wearing. Include colour, designer labels/brands:

Shirt/Sweater:	
Trousers/Skirt:	
Outerwear, e.g. coat, jacket:	
Headwear:	
Gloves:	
Scarf:	
Footwear:	
Jewellery, e.g. watch, rings:	
Other:	

Time, date and location last seen:	
------------------------------------	--

By whom/contact details:	
--------------------------	--

RISK INDICATORS	RISK ASSESSMENT INFORMATION
Any mental health issues physical or learning disability / difficulties	
Risk of suicide/self-harm and what are the indicators or triggers for this?	
Any previous harm suffered when missing; IF YES – FULL DETAILS REQUIRED	
Is the child/young person's behaviour likely to be a risk to the community and in what way?	
Medication / Medical conditions	
Are they at risk of sexual or criminal exploitation? (Include details of any recent or specific concerns)	
Likely use of drugs/ alcohol/ solvents and what type and amount?	

Does anyone pose a risk to YP (Please provide evidence):	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does the YP pose risk to anyone (Please provide evidence):	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

Media release?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	On-call manager aware?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Persons informed of child missing (example Parent, EDT, Social Worker, Professionals involved etc):			
Details of other staff on duty at the time of missing report (if missing from care home):			
Any other information that may be of help to the Police:			

THIS SECTION SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY THE PERSON REPORTING

Name and position of person searching:	
Have you searched the address the young person is missing from, including outside/grounds and any outbuildings?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Have you searched the young person's bedroom?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Please detail any information or items located:	
Please detail any information or items missing:	

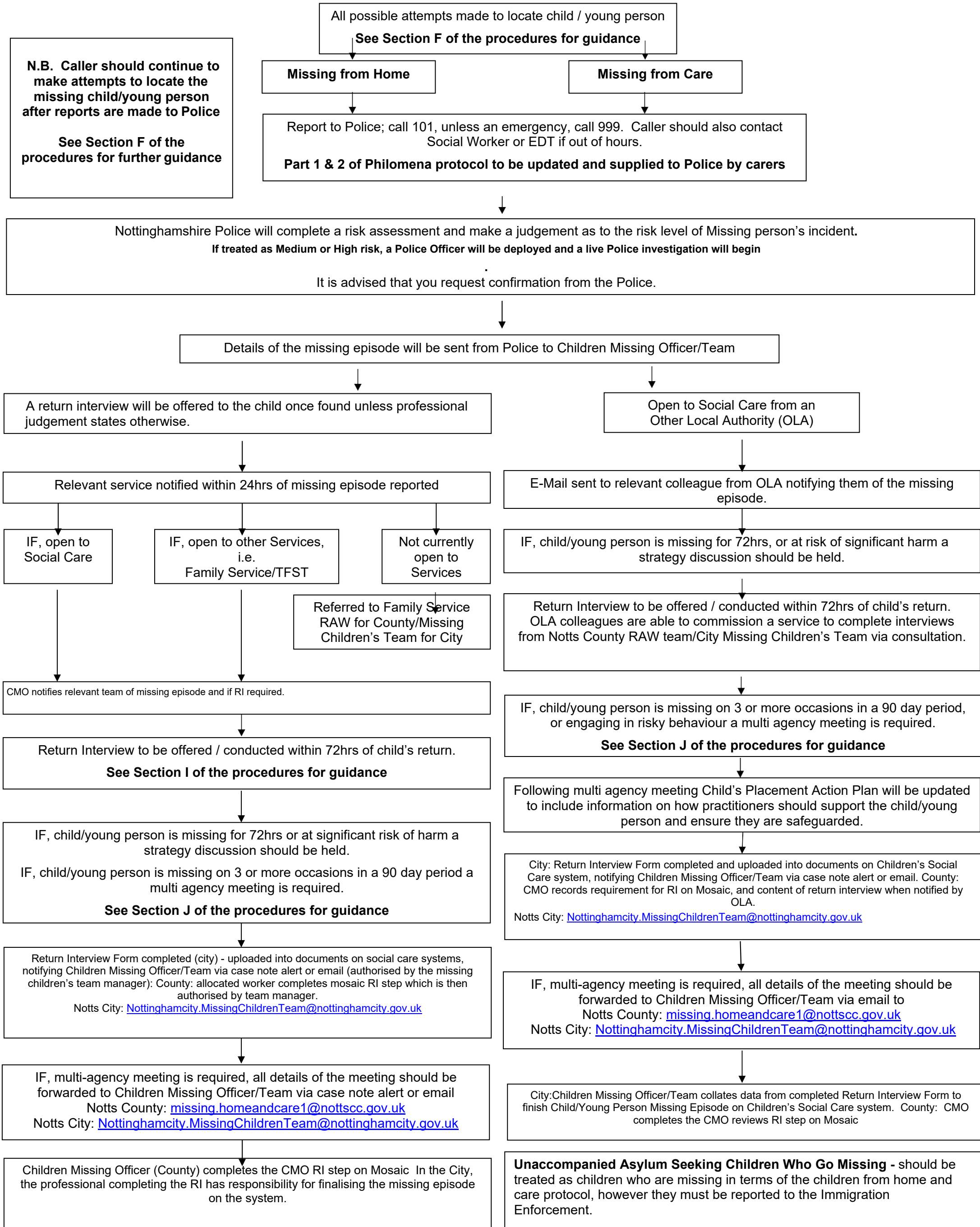
THIS SHOULD BE COMPLETED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE MISSING PERSON - RISK ASSESSED LOCATIONS & CONTACTS TO ASSIST IN LOCATING A MISSING YOUNG PERSON FORM.

What enquiries have already been completed to try and locate missing person prior to reporting to the police:
What enquiries will you continue to do whilst the young person is missing (include how often you will complete these):
How will you record this and notify the police that you have done these enquiries:
What arrangements have been made to collect the young person when located:

--

Completed by:	
Relationship to the person:	
Date:	

It is the responsibility of the person/agency completing and the recipient to protect the information from theft and compromise. This form and the information contained in it must be securely stored.



Appendix D

RETURN HOME INTERVIEW – MISSING CHILDREN (Inter-Agency Practice Guidance) (Please see back sheet for guidance notes)

For further information with regards to the Missing Children Protocol please visit:
http://nottinghamshirescb.proceduresonline.com/local_resources.html?zoom_highlight=Missing+Children

**Please note this form must be completed electronically as it will be shared.
Do NOT make any amendments to the missing episode on Framework.**

Please click on the grey boxes to select from drop down menus or insert free text.

Child's Details:

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____
Missing from: Please Select _____ If out of County; Responsible Authority: Please Select _____
Has child/young person been reported missing before? Please Select If yes, how many previous episodes? _____

Interview conducted by:

Role: Please Select _____

Missing Episode Details:

Date and time child was reported missing: _____ Date and time child found: _____
(this information will be in the episode on Framework – please read and refer to)
Length of time missing: _____ Date of Return Interview: _____
Date of Multi Agency if required: _____ Date of Strategy Discussion if missing for over 72hrs: _____
(if missing for over 72hrs or 3x missing in a 90 day period or engaging in risky behaviour a multi agency meeting will be required – this will be indicated in missing episode via task and a email sent by CMO)

Parent/Carer/Young Person given consent for Return Interview: Please Select _____

Confirmation that Parent/Carer/Young Person has been advised that information may be shared with the Police (or other agencies) for safeguarding purposes: Please Select _____

If no please explain why and any follow up action, please consider if previous return interviews have been refused: _____

According to the child / young person what circumstances led to them being reported missing?

Was the missing episode planned? (did they take money, food, clothes) Did something happen? Were they running to/from something? Any issues regarding home, placement, school issues, family stresses, health, peer pressure, drugs / alcohol, wanting family contact? Wanting to clear their head? Were they encouraged by others to stay out? Were they kept out against their will?

Was the young person missing alone or with others?

Who were they missing with, names, ages, descriptions if potentially pose a risk, vehicle details, addresses etc

What did the child / young person say happened during their time missing?

Where did they go? How did they get to and from? Was there any trouble? Who were they with? Where did they stay? With whom? How did they feel? What did they do for food, money, change of clothing? Where did they change? Hygiene? Where did they shower? Did they make contact with anyone? Were they scared to return? Did they want to return? Did anything bad happen to them (physical, sexual, mental), were they held captive? Were they offered anything? Was it bought, given, stolen for them? Did they commit crime? If so, on their own or with others?

Actual harm suffered whilst missing? Please Select If yes, please select: Please Select

Comments:

Criminal act committed whilst missing? Please Select

Comments:

Return information and observations of child on their return?

Consider clothing, demeanour, under the influence, dishevelled, tired, hygiene, child's response to missing, cash, mobile, health. Did they return of their own accord? Were they returned by someone else? Did they asked to be picked up? Were they scared to return? Did they run from the Police? How do they feel now they are back? Is there anything they need? How have they been treated since they came back?

Parent/Carer Response:

Response to missing episode, family function and well-being, basic care/safety, guidance/boundaries, anxiety, domestic violence, mental health

Identified risks/concerns whilst missing:

e.g. self harm, mental health, disability, gangs, sexual activity, substance misuse, criminal activity, contact with people who pose risk, abuse, bullying, gifts (mobiles, taxis, clothes etc), likelihood of further missing episodes

Current Support Networks/Strengths:

Significant relationships, friends, family, school, key worker, hobbies/interests

How does the young person look back / reflect on their missing episode:

What could they have done differently? Who could they have spoken to? Do they see the risks they could / did put themselves in? Coping strategies

Specific Identified Vulnerabilities - Please select all that apply to **THIS** missing episode, you may select more than one.

Emotional Issues: Please Select Please Select Please Select

Health Related: Please Select Please Select Please Select

Risk Issues: Please Select Please Select Please Select

Do you expect the child / young person to be reported missing again? Please Select

Whilst not dissuading parents from reporting their child missing in future please encourage them to complete some basic measures to try and locate them. i.e. search home and out buildings, contact friends or visit known locations if safe to do so.

Recommendations and Decisions: Please Select If already allocated to Social Care: Please Select

Comments:

When considering on going support please consider early indicators of a Child In Need (CIN) i.e. Anti-social, Behaviour, Bereavement, Bullying, Domestic Abuse, Drugs / alcohol, Gang Culture, Knife Crime, Learning difficulties / Mental health issues, Non-school attendance / exclusion from school, Parenting / relationship issues, Poor self image, Eating disorder.

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE RETURN HOME INTERVIEW FORM

This guidance aims to assist you in conducting the return home interview discussion with the child. This form collates the information required to work to the statutory guidance. Engaging the child is very important because we need to identify, with them, the risks and harm they may face when they go missing. A positive and holistic interview should enable a much clearer picture of the child's needs and reflect the risks that they may be exposed to. The child or young person should be encouraged to respond to the 'open' trigger questions as freely as possible.

Previous information needs to be considered in subsequent interviews to understand a full and changing picture.

Please note that the Return home interview will be shared with all Services working with the child/young person.

Please ensure that you complete all sections of the interview form so that data can be collated and analysed. This data is outcome focussed and will enable a local needs analysis to be undertaken.

RETURN HOME INTERVIEW FORM AND GUIDANCE FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE MISSING FROM HOME OR CARE

Missing Person Notification (MISPER)

The Missing Children Protocol requires that a return home interview takes place within **72 hours** of the child/young person's return. The interview is to be recorded on the return home interview form below.

Please note that in line with the Missing Protocol a **Multi Agency meeting MUST** take place if a young person is:

- 3 time missing
- missing for more than 72hrs, or
- engaging in risky behaviour

It may be possible to incorporate the missing requirement into, for example, a child sexual exploitation strategy meeting (CSE). This would need to be a clear agenda item and minuted and the CMO made aware.

ON COMPLETION OF THE RETURN HOME INTERVIEW

All details of the missing episode can be found within the Missing Child / Young Person episode on Framework. **Please note the missing episode is for information only and will be completed by the Children Missing Officer.**

- please upload return home interview into Mosaic documents
- send confirmation case note alert to Aimee Robinson at aimee.robinson@nottscc.gov.uk

Compliance with this request will be audited on a monthly basis by the Missing Children Steering Group and on a quarterly basis by the Nottinghamshire Children Safeguarding Board.

If you require any further information or guidance please contact Aimee Robinson on 0115 804 1869

Please note that the full inter-agency practice guidance can be found at:

http://nottinghamshirescb.proceduresonline.com/local_resources.html?zoom_highlight=Missing+Children

LINKS BETWEEN MISSING AND CHILDREN'S SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Early Indicators of Child Sexual Exploitation – please see

http://cms.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/cse_guidance.pdf

- Overtly sexualised dress, sexualised risk taking (including on the internet)
- Associating with other sexually exploited children
- Reduced contact with family and friends or other support networks
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Self harm
- Stayed out overnight with no reasonable explanation

Additional Indicators of Child Sexual Exploitation

- Child under 13 engaging in penetrative sex with another young person over 15 years
- Disclosure of sexual assault and then refusing to make or withdrawing a complaint
- Child under 16 meeting unknown adult(s)
- Child under 16 getting into unknown car(s)
- Having a much older boyfriend / girlfriend
- Chronic drug / alcohol use
- Breakdown of residential placements due to behaviour
- Unaccounted money or goods including mobile phones, drugs and alcohol
- Multiple sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

Serious Indicators of Child Sexual Exploitation

- Being involved in CSE through being seen in hotspots i.e. certain flats, recruiting grounds, cars or houses associating with known CSE adults
- Clipping (offering to have sex for money or other payment then running before sex takes place)
- Receiving rewards of money or goods for recruiting peers into CSE
- Being 'groomed' on the internet – (not just using internet to communicate)
- Pattern of street homelessness and staying with an adult believed to be sexually exploiting them
- Engaging in sexual activity with different / unknown adults
- Removed from known 'red light' district by professionals due to suspected CSE
- Being taken to clubs and hotels by adults and engaging in sexual activity
- Abduction and forced imprisonment for CSE
- Disappearing from the 'system' with no contact or support
- Being bought – trafficked within UK
- Indicators of CSE alongside serious self-harming



LCS - Missing Children Team
Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham
NG2 3NG
Tel:
Fax:

Missing Person Return home interview

Date Reported Missing	
Date/Time Missing	
Date Form Commenced	
Date Form Completed	
Police Log no	
What happened to make you go missing? (Planned, bored, something happened, to get away ...)	
What happened whilst you were missing? (Where did you go, who were you with, any trouble, anybody else saw you/met you, how did you get back, how did you feel?)	
What can be done to prevent you going missing again?	
Any concerns/issues raised by the young person?	
Is there any further information, including intelligence that is not subject to this report?	
Child Protection Referral	
Details of where/when return home interview took place (time/date/place)	
Details of person coordinating return home interview and any other persons present	

Questions for return home interview

Why?	Yes/No	Comments
Anything in the home?		
Peer pressure?		
Going to get drugs/alcohol?		
Wanting family contact?		
To clear your head?		
Did you plan to run way - take food, clothes, money?		
Did you just stay out?		
Did friends encourage you to stay out?		
Were you kept against your will?		

When out	Yes/No	Comments
Were you scared to return?		
Did you at any point want to return?		
Did anything bad happen to you - hurt, injured, drugged, abused (sexual,physical,mental)?		
Were you held captive?		
Were you offered drink/drugs - how much, what was it, was it bought, given or stolen and where from?		
Did you have anywhere to stay? Where did you go?		
Were food, money and clothing an issue? If so how did you manage?		
Did you manage to shower and if so where?		
Did you manage to change your clothes and if so where?		
Was there anything you needed whilst away?		
Did you make contact with anyone whilst away - friends, family or carers?		
Did you get involved with the police?		
Did you commit crime - on your own, with someone, did someone ask you to do it?		
Did you run from the police?		

Returning	Yes/No	Comments
Did you return of your own accord?		
Were you returned by someone?		
Did you ask to be picked up?		
Were you scared to come back?		
How do you feel now that you are back?		

Attachments (0)

There are no attached documents

Appendix E



Multiple Missing and Hot Spots Meeting Terms of Reference

Purpose of the Group

The group will take a lead in scrutinising the cases of those children who repeatedly go missing/missing – no apparent risk in Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City; and the locations from which they are reported missing/missing – no apparent risk with the aim of reducing the incidence of children going missing and/or reducing the risks they face.

Areas of Responsibility

The thresholds of cases eligible for discussion at the meetings are:

- Children who go missing/missing – no apparent risk on five or more occasions in the previous 30 days.
- Children who may have gone missing/missing – no apparent risk on less than five occasions in the previous 30 days but who are considered high risk or of specific concern.

The Police Missing Persons teams and the LA Children Missing Officers, prior to each meeting, will discuss and agree the cases to be considered by the group. The outcome of these discussions will be recorded in the child's Children's Services case record.

The names of the children to be considered will be provided to the relevant social care team and agencies, to gain an update from the relevant professional(s) in advance of the meeting.

The group will share information about premises and/or locations which may be considered a 'hot spot'.

The group will monitor those children identified as missing/missing – no apparent risk young people, (including those at risk of/subject to Child Sexual Exploitation and other significant risks) to ensure the local Joint Protocol for Missing Children has been adhered to and to identify any further action and/or escalation.

Where appropriate, the group will consider children from other Local Authorities (OLA) placed in Nottingham City/Nottinghamshire and children from Nottingham

City/Nottinghamshire placed in other LA areas.

The group will record and assign the actions agreed at each meeting and will circulate these prior to each meeting. Updates and actions will be reviewed at subsequent meetings.

This meeting will not replace operational team management or accountability for the cases; it will provide challenge and a quality assurance function.

Meetings

The group will meet monthly and will be chaired by the Police Missing Persons Lead or a nominated representative. The vice-chair in the County is the NCC Service Manager Safeguarding Children (Strategic) and in the City, the Sergeant from the Missing Persons Team.

City and County cases will be discussed in separate sections of the meeting with an overlap to consider those children who cross borders and any other issues.

Membership

The core membership will include:-

- Police Missing Persons Lead (Chair)
- Police Missing Persons Sergeant – City
- Police Looked After Children Officer - City
- Police Missing Persons Coordinators – City and County
- Police Sexual Exploitation Investigation Unit Officer
- Nottinghamshire County Council Service Manager Safeguarding Children (Strategic)
- Nottinghamshire County Council Children Missing Officer
- Nottinghamshire County Council Service Manager for Family Services (including Education Welfare)
- Nottinghamshire County Council Service Manager, Residential Services
- Nottinghamshire County Council Placements team
- Nottingham City Council Service Manager responsible for missing
- Nottingham City Council Service Manager for LAC
- Nottingham City Council Children Missing Officer
- Nottingham City Council Service Manager for Education Welfare
- Nottinghamshire Health Care Trust 0-19 Service
- Nottingham Citycare Partnership – Safeguarding Nurse

Additional professionals will be invited as necessary.

Accountability

The group will be accountable to the respective LSCPs through the Nottinghamshire County Council Missing Children Steering Group and the Nottingham City Council Missing Children Sub-Group.

March 2022