

Appendix 1

Missing Children Multi-Agency Strategy 2016 - 18

**Working Together to Safeguard Children going Missing from
Home & Care in Bradford.**

Statement of Intent

Children who go missing from home and care are an extremely vulnerable group of children and young people. It is estimated that nationally every year there are approximately 240,000 notifications of children going missing which relate to approximately 140,000 children. In the United Kingdom, a child is reported missing every three minutes. In Bradford a total of 1,290 missing children occurrences were reported to Bradford Police in the 6 months to 30th September 2017. This equates to 215 per month (please note this does not include “absent” episodes).

Missing children is a safeguarding issue as, whilst the majority of children who go missing return quickly, many others will either be at risk of or suffer harm in the form of a wide range of dangers which includes physical abuse or being groomed for radicalisation and exploitation. They may sleep rough or commit crimes to survive and their physical and emotional health may suffer as well as their general health, education and social relationships. There are also links between going missing, being sexually exploited and trafficking.

From research there are many reasons why children go missing from home or care often referred to as push-pull factors; for example they may be pushed away from home or pulled towards something.

Children who go missing from care are an especially vulnerable group of children. Of the 522 children who went missing in the 6 months to 30th Sept 2017, 104 (20%) were in the care of the local authority when they went missing and account for 568 (44%) missing occurrences.

We will develop an effective local strategy to ensure a co-ordinated multi-agency response to children going missing from home or care.

It is our clear intent to contribute to improving the lives of children living in Bradford both within home and care. We will do so by ensuring children and young people understand the risks of going missing and of being exploited. This will lead to better outcomes for children and young people.

This strategy and action plan is based on the national guidance for responding to missing children re-issued in January 2014.

“Statutory Guidance on Children who run away or go missing from home or care” it defines the roles and responsibilities of those agencies active in this field including Local Authorities, Local Safeguarding Children Boards, multi-agency partners (Police, Health etc) and the Voluntary Sector and the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) ‘*Report from the Joint Enquiry into Children*

who go missing from care' (July 2012). It will be updated as required in line with developments from central government and policy, practice or research.

The strategy covers children of all ages that are reported missing to the police and meets the criteria within the protocol.

The strategy for 2016-8 has an emphasis on:

- Prevention: Reducing the number of children who go missing
- Protection: Reducing the risk of harm to those who go missing
- Provision: Providing missing children & families with support and Guidance

Our key strategic priorities are:

- Mapping data and Intelligence to understand needs in relation to levels of missing children
- Putting systems in place to effectively respond to children who go missing
- To offer children who go missing a return interview in a timely manner (in line with the *missing protocol*)
- Increase understanding & awareness of missing children issues among children, their parents and carers as well as with professionals across the multi-agency partnership
- Ensure a multi-agency response to meeting the needs of children and young people who go missing

How we will achieve our priorities?

There is a strategic group service manager lead for missing children within CSS as well as a dedicated police manager.

A multi-agency missing children steering group will meet regularly to monitor and progress strategy and planning, taking into account new legislation, research, policy or guidance.

Strategic planning and working in a multi-agency way will enable us to work collaboratively, consistently, and effectively to improve the lives of children and young people at risk of harm from going missing from home or care.

The missing children steering group will:

- Take a strategic lead in the co-ordination of resources and services for children who go missing
- Scrutinise performance, taking a robust approach to data collation and analysis, to inform practice and resource planning.
- Drive forward and support the multi-agency action plans to ensure that the work that needs to be done to tackle missing children is carried forward

The work of the group will report to the Bradford Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB). Elected members will also be updated annually.

Prevention	
What are we going to do?	How will we do it?
1.1 Ensure that there are clear multi-agency policies and processes to support the work on responding to missing children.	By ensuring that multi-agency policies and protocols are agreed and located on the relevant websites, shared across the partnership, and that compliance is monitored through supervision and case audit ensuring all professionals work to the missing from home or care protocol agreed between CSS and the WYP and the statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from care.
1.2 Have an understanding of the “picture” and context of “missing” in Bradford and whether there are locations or venues which are high risk and where children are regularly going missing.	<p>The police and local authority will collate and share data which will be analysed to identify trends, patterns and hot spots which will then be targeted and shared as appropriate with partner agencies.</p> <p>A data analyst and missing coordinator are in post to undertake this activity.</p> <p>Develop a set of performance indicators to monitor the targeted activity to reduce missing in the district</p> <p>Targets in place: DMT report</p>
1.3 Develop a better understanding of the reasons why children and young people run away and go missing from home and care.	<p>Through the use of data collated from return interviews an analysis of the reasons why children go missing from home or care will be developed and consideration will be given to see if a strategic response is required.</p> <p>Through the use of available research to develop a wider understanding of the drivers for children who go missing and to identify actions and preventative services which will enable</p>

	<p>intervention at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Ensure that we listen to young people and use CLA reviews, Viewpoint and other participation forums to understand why young people might engage in going missing. .</p> <p>Target: Number of RTH interviews</p>
1.4 Ensure that colleagues working with, or in contact with, children understand missing children issues to support them in developing intervention strategies to prevent escalation.	<p>Through multi-agency training on the policy and protocol for missing children and development events and briefings around the research to ensure staff have sufficient awareness of missing children issues.</p> <p>Target: number of staff accessing relevant training</p>
1.5 Ensure that colleagues working in targeted early help understand the impact of missing and are able to signpost to effective services to support the child and family	<p>Through the effective alignment coordination of services within Targeted Early Help effective interventions can be offered to the child and their family at the earliest opportunity</p> <p>Target: contacts with TEH where missing indicated</p>
1.6 Ensure colleagues working with, or in contact with children, who go missing, understand the impact children may suffer upon their physical and emotional health.	<p>Through multi-agency training and development to ensure staff are equipped to carry out their responsibilities towards missing children have sufficient awareness of the possible impacts on physical and emotional health and awareness of the services available.</p> <p>Target: number of staff accessing relevant training</p>
1.7 Ensure that colleagues in education are tracking and responding to children and young people who are missing from education	<p>Through multi-agency training and development to ensure staff have sufficient awareness of missing children issues. The Safeguarding in Education Hub will monitor and oversee all elements of children missing from education.</p>

	Target: number of staff accessing relevant training
1.8 Offer support to schools to deliver an education package to the children and young people of Bradford designed to heighten awareness of the risks involved when engaging in this behaviour	<p>Develop and deliver a package of training resources for young people in consultation with children and their families who have experienced missing children behaviour.</p> <p>Target: number of young people accessing within school</p>
<p>1.9 Improve links with private sector children's homes within the district.</p> <p>1.10 Support foster carers and residential staff in their understanding of what they can do to make going missing less likely.</p>	<p>Include the private sector residential and fostering services in policy and practice development and training.</p> <p>Provide clear guidance to homes and carers so that they understand their role in preventing missing occurrences and the need to listen to the child's voice to understand the reasons young people in care go missing and support carers in residential and fostering settings to develop strategies and interventions to prevent missing episodes from occurring</p> <p>Ensure that delegated authority is delivered across placements</p> <p>Through an emphasis on missing children within the LAC strategy.</p> <p>Target: Number of 1st reviews where delegated authority agreed</p>
1.11 We will ensure that the link between going missing and child sexual exploitation (CSE) is well known and understood.	Emphasise the link within our policies, procedures, training and awareness raising to ensure that those who undertake return interviews and safe and well interviews are aware of the inherent risks in going missing.

	<p>Ensure there is a clear remit within the Missing Children multi-agency steering group to maintain the link to CSE.</p> <p>Ensure the CSE hub lead feeds into the multi agency missing group and there is good quality sharing of information.</p>
<p>Analysis of Impact: April 2017</p> <p>Staff across the authority are now aware of the risks and dangers to children who go missing and will be equipped to offer a child centred response to children who go missing</p> <p>The multi-agency partnership shares a collective understanding of the risks missing children face across a range of dangers.</p> <p>Return to home interviews have taken place for the majority of young people who are not CLA and have been reported missing.</p> <p>Return to home interviews for non-open/CIN/CP is delivered by an independent service, offering the children and young people the opportunity to discuss the missing episode. Referrals to early help are put in place to support families.</p> <p>Return to home interviews for CLA is delivered by a commissioned service and the children and young people are also seen by their Social Worker.</p> <p>A Local Authority Missing Coordinator is in post and reviewing every missing incident, looking at key themes for missing and ensuring that each incident is dealt with following local policies and procedures.</p> <p>Links are in place with all private children's home providers in</p>	<p>Progress: April 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing Policy and Protocol in place. • Policy and Protocol uploaded and available on website and linked to the multi-agency procedures. • Web page developed by Missing Coordinator on Bradford Safeguarding Children's Board Website. This gives up to date policy, procedures and additional information. • Multi-agency training is developed and advertised across the partnership. • Missing briefings have taken place at a Social Work Forums. • E-learning training is in place and is promoted within the Local Authority. • Information gathered from return to home interviews is reviewed by both the Local Authority Missing Coordinator and the Police Missing Coordinator. This is also shared with partners. • Training/briefing sessions have been delivered to new private care providers within the district. • Local Authority Missing Coordinator reviews/devises/supports Risk Management Plans for persistent mispers. • Police Missing coordinator, along with Local Authority Missing Coordinator continues to review/devise reviewing reporting strategies with placements and social workers.

<p>the area so they are also furnished with the local policies and procedures to ensure that they try prevent missing incidents.</p> <p>All persistent mispers have a reporting strategy and missing risk management plan in place, focusing on activities to reduce the risks, prevention work around missing and are done alongside the child/ young person (where appropriate) to ensure their views are captured.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A regular meeting is held with the private children's homes manager to ensure they are aware of local arrangements and follow protocols
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Protection	
What are we going to do?	How are we going to do it?
2.1 We have a multi-agency co-ordinated approach to missing children collocated within SHMH.	We will do this through our partnership working at a strategic Level, within the daily meeting, the weekly escalation meeting, the bi weekly strategic missing meeting, the bi monthly partnership high risk CSE/missing meeting and with the CEX on a quarterly basis.
2.2 Information sharing is a critical factor in correctly identifying vulnerability and in ensuring that children are found quickly.	Agencies will share information and intelligence with each other to assist in the rapid location of young people. Return to home interviews and safe and well forms will be shared across agencies.
2.3 The police will inform the Local Authority of all missing children notifications and subsequent found notifications. The police will respond robustly in investigating missing children.	Automatic missing and found notifications will be sent to Children's Social Care who will screen them. The police will make efforts to locate missing children using available information and intelligence and using a robust risk assessment model.
2.4 Using the information and data gathered from return interview at a strategic level we will endeavour to better understand the reasons why children and young people run away and go missing from home.	We will use this information to respond on an individual level to the young person by seeking appropriate support. We will use this data to review any trends and these to inform service provision. We will share return to home interview reports with partners. Target: number of return to home interviews shared
2.5 We will ensure that there is a robust approach to completing return interviews.	We will robustly monitor and track compliance of the undertaking of return interviews. Target: increase the number of return to home interviews

	completed
2.6 Information and data will be collected and reported on regularly to ensure that there is oversight of the 'problem' and response	<p>Regular reporting will be undertaken and shared with partners at the weekly missing meeting and the missing children steering group.</p> <p>A performance framework and management information data set will be developed with the support of analysts.</p> <p>Target: PI's within DMT dataset</p>
<p>Analysis of Impact: April 2017</p> <p>All missing events are audited to ensure that protocols have been followed, that all appropriate plans are in place to protect the child or young person.</p> <p>Information is shared effectively across partner agencies on a regular basis.</p> <p>The reasons for young people going missing are reported into the strategic missing meeting, to give good oversight.</p>	<p>Progress: April 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is improvement in the recording of missing held on the LCS system and this has been changed and tracked by the missing coordinator. • All return to home interviews continues to be shared between the police and council missing coordinators. • Challenge is taking place where protocols are not followed and this is reported at a strategic level. • A performance report related to missing is provided at weekly missing meetings.

Provision	
What are we going to do?	How are we going to do it?
<p>3.1 We will develop a range of services for children and their family that meets their identified needs and reduces the likelihood of further risk in the future.</p> <p>3.2 We will ensure that services to young people and families are of a high standard and that safety and well being remain paramount.</p>	<p>We will ensure that young people receive a service in a timely manner.</p> <p>We will ensure that young people and their family receive a supportive and effective service or that they are signposted to the appropriate service. We will survey children and their families to gain feedback on the effectiveness of the service they have received.</p> <p>We will audit cases to evaluate the effectiveness of the services being offered to determine whether they are reducing the number of missing reports and the level of risk to children. Ensure that the quality of the work is good.</p> <p>Target: number of cases rated good Target: number of young people accessing VCS and impact of intervention</p>
<p>Analysis of Impact: April 2017</p> <p>Return to home interviews are offered to all young people who have been missing.</p> <p>Referrals are made to targeted early help following missing episodes if required.</p> <p>All missing return interviews on non-open, CIN or CP cases are done using Signs of Safety.</p> <p>Recording on ICS is of a good quality.</p>	<p>Progress: April 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audits are taking place on a regular basis. • All missing incidents are subject to scrutiny by missing coordinator daily. • Training is being delivered to teams and homes in relation to missing reporting strategies, risk management plans and protocols. • Missing e-learning is to be provided to private children's homes

Key reports and references

Statutory Guidance on children who run away and go missing from home or care (DCSF, July 2009)

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-00670-2009.pdf>

Missing children and adults, A cross Government strategy (Home Office, 2011)

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

Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked: Practice Guidance (Department of Education, 2011)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/177033/DFE-00084-2011.pdf

Statutory Guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care (Department for Education, 2014)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care_3_.pdf

The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Runaway and Missing Children and Adults and the APPG for Looked After and Care Leavers issue the report from the Joint Inquiry into Children who go Missing from Care (All Party Parliamentary Groups, 2012)

http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/tcs/u32/joining_appg_inquiry_report...pdf

Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups, interim report (Office of Children's Commissioner, 2012)

<http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/info/csegg1>

Missing children (Ofsted, 2013)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/missing-children>

Child sexual exploitation and the response to localised grooming (House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, 2013)

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmhaff/68/68i.pdf>

If only someone had listened: Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups Final Report (Office of Children's Commissioner, 2013)

<http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publications/if-only-someone-had-listened-inquiry-child-sexual-exploitation-gangs-and-groups>

Interim Guidance on the Management, Recording and Investigation of Missing Papers (College of Policing & ACPO, 2013)
<http://library.college.police.uk/docs/college-of-policing/Interim-Missing-Persons-Guidance-2013.pdf>

Inspection of Children's Homes; framework and guidance for the inspection of children's homes. (Ofsted, 2015)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspection-childrens-homes-framework>

Missing Children Multi-Agency ACTION PLAN 2016-18

**Working Together to Safeguard Children going Missing from
Home & Care in Bradford**

Overarching strategy and governance

Responsibility

There will be an effective local strategy to ensure there is a co-ordinated multi-agency response to children missing from home and care based on a robust, thorough risk assessment of the extent and nature of missing children locally. The work on missing will be monitored through the Missing Children Strategic Group and ultimately by the CSE Sub-Group of the Bradford Safeguarding Children Board.

Action		Lead	Timescale	Progress to date	Rag Rating
a)	Complete a Strategy Document	David Byrom	September 2016	To be signed of at vulnerable children sub group	Green
b)	Complete an Action Plan	David Byrom	September 2016	To be signed of at vulnerable children sub group	Green
c)	Complete revised terms of reference for the multi agency missing meeting	David Byrom	April 2016	Terms of reference were agreed at SPMM on the 15-04-16	Green
d)	Report to BSCB on a regular basis	David Byrom	Reporting schedule to be planned through the year	TBA	Amber

1. Prevention

Reduce the number of children going missing

The ambition is to protect and prevent children from going missing. We need to reduce the number of children going missing and to have effective prevention strategies, education work and early intervention by agencies in repeat cases. This will help to reduce the vulnerability and likelihood of vulnerable children going missing and reduce the number of repeat cases.

Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress to date	Rag Rating
1.1 Establish effective communication channels between BSCB and partner agencies to share information and training.	David Byrom Missing children steering group	Ongoing	A multi-agency steering group meets quarterly. The Information sharing agreement has been updated	Green
1.2 To provide current inter-agency practice guidance.	David Byrom DI Richard McNamara	Ongoing	Process Map and procedures in place	Green
1.3 To ensure LA procedures are fit for purpose	David Byrom	In place	Tri.x procedure manual is up to date Ensure delegated authority is in place in all placements	Green Amber
1.4 Establish an effective independent service to respond to missing notification for those children who do not have a social worker or other statutory worker.	David Byrom	In place	All non LAC children who go missing are visited within 72 hours by the Placement Support Service	Green
1.5 Children who have a	Placement Support Service	Ongoing	All children who go missing will be offered an independent return	Green

	social worker or statutory worker will receive a return interview and associated support in line with the protocol.	Voiceability		interview. Expectation that all children who go missing will receive a visit from their SW Carers in placement to speak to YP	
1.6	To develop a clear preventative strategy for engaging with schools and young people and for this to be reportable.	Barnado's BSCB	Ongoing	Awareness session with schools in the district	Amber
1.7	To engage with private providers (fostering and residential) to raise awareness of the missing children	David Byrom Lynne Thompson	Ongoing	Weekly reporting by missing coordinator in relation to missing children. Meeting with Registered Managers to share expectation and local procedures	Green
1.8	Share information with residential staff on ways to reduce the risk of missing children including the views of children.	Liz Perry Lynne Thompson	Ongoing	Expectation of staff issued to service so that all are clear about their role and responsibilities. On going liaison to ensure that appropriate plans are discussed. Review Restorative Protocol	Green
1.9	To reflect missing children and CSE in the LAC strategy.	Di Drury	In place	The LAC strategy covers these areas.	Green
1.10	To ensure that children who are placed out of the	David Byrom Lynne Thompson	On-going	The Placements team contact the local authority and safeguarding team when additional risks are	Amber

county receive the same response to instances of going missing.			apparent. Missing coordinator ensures that discussions take place with other local authorities if persistent mispers are in their area.	
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2. Protection

Reduce the risk of harm caused to those who go missing

It is important to understand the scale and nature of the problem and there should be systems in place to monitor the prevalence and response to it. It is vital that once professionals are aware of notifications of missing that there are clear and robust systems in place.

	Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress to date	Rag Rating
2.1	The police will routinely inform the LA of all missing notifications and found.	Police missing coordinator	In place	There are effective systems in place for this to happen.	Green
2.2	The police will apply a risk model to children who are reported missing.	Police missing coordinator	In place	This system is in place	Green
2.3	The IAT will screen all closed case notifications on a daily basis.	MASH duty team	In place	This system is in place	Green
2.4	Council Missing coordinator will screen all notifications on a daily basis.	Lynne Thompson	In place	This system is in place.	Green
2.5	Map the levels of missing and related data within the Police	Police missing coordinator	In place	Weekly reporting is in place. Coordinator has developed	Green

	and CSS. The police will share monthly data.	Lynne Thompson		systems to collate data to inform service	
2.6	A monthly meeting to review high risk CSE who are persistent Misper is in place	Lynne Thompson Police missing coordinator	In place	Meeting active in assessing risks and task work	Green
2.7	A weekly meeting to review all concerning persistent mispers and escalate to senior management concerns.	Lynne Thompson Police missing coordinator	In place	Meeting active in assessing risks and task work	Green
2.8	A performance management framework to be developed to enable better accountability.	Dave Preston PPC	In place	PI's are developed, require further work regarding targets and monitoring.	Green
2.9	Data should be routinely analysed to ensure that 'hot spots' are responded to.	Lynne Thompson Police missing coordinator CSE Data analyst	In place	Performance racetrack and monthly reporting in place	Green

3. Provision

Provide missing children and their families with support and guidance.

Vulnerable children and their families have a right to understand how and where to access support and guidance to minimise anxiety and distress at difficult times.

Action	Lead	Timescale	Progress to date	Rag Rating
3.1 Return interviews and multi-agency meetings to be held in a timely	David Byrom	In place	This is being reported on.	Green

	manner. Reported on a quarterly basis.				
3.2	Auditing of missing cases will be undertaken to ascertain the quality of the response to the young person and their family to include the voice of the young person.	David Byrom	In place	All missing events are being scrutinised a wider management audit of missing took place in May	Green