

Guidance for Undertaking Return Home Interviews

Policies and Guidance

Department of Education published statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care (2014) which states that a child or young person should be offered an “independent” return home interview. The interview should be carried out within 72 hours of the child returning to their home or care setting.

In CBC we offer voluntary return home interviews to all children and young people who have been reported missing and who are living or placed within the CBC area or are CBC looked after children and young people placed out of area.

Process:

All children and young people who are missing should be notified to the Access and Referral Hub.

Notifications of missing are received daily from the police where children and young people have been reported to them as missing.

Notification of missing are also made to the Access and Referral Hub by social workers and early help workers who are aware of children and young people who are missing where family have not reported this to the police.

Notification of missing are also made to the Access and Referral Hub by schools and other professionals who hold this information.

A contact is created on the mosaic system and this is sent to the RHI team who then monitor the situation and upon return make contact with the family or young person and offer a RHI. Our aim is to make contact and complete the RHI within 72 hours.

The RHI worker records the findings of the interview in the RHI workflow on mosaic. To inform the work of police in intelligence gathering and analysis appropriate information gathered from the interview is shared with the police using the multi-agency information submission form. The completed RHI interview is reviewed by the Exploitation and Missing Co-ordinator.

The interview workflow is forwarded on mosaic to the allocated social worker or early helper worker to review. The allocated worker reviews the information and completes the workflow for the RHI. This should be progressed within 24 hours. The allocated worker is required to assess the information received and ensure that proportionate actions are being taken to safeguard the young person. This may include completing or updating CSE risk assessment. The RHI should also be reviewed by the team manager and allocated worker at the next case supervision to ensure that proportionate actions are being taken to safeguard the young person and any patterns are being identified and the care plan is being informed by the information received. The RHI information should be reviewed at the next TAC/CIN/core group/LAC meeting to ensure the care plan is being informed by the information received.

Where there is no allocated worker the RHI worker will assess the level of risk for the child or young person and make referral to the hub consideration of early help or social work support as appropriate. The Exploitation and Missing Co-ordinator will review and close all RHI workflows where there is no allocated worker to oversee the recommendations of the RHI workers regarding need and level of ongoing support.

Where RHI is declined by a family or young person this information is included in the RHI workflow to the allocated worker so that they are aware that this was the decision of the family or young person. Where RHI is declined by a family or young person and there is no allocated worker referral and where concerns are identified then a referral is made to Hub for further consideration of support to be offered to the family or young person.