



Safeguarding Partnership Board

Children Missing from Care Multi Agency Framework

DOCUMENT PROFILE

Short Title	Children Missing from Care
Document Purpose	To provide practitioners with a multi-agency framework in which they can safely manage cases of children missing from care through an agreed pathway.
Target Audience	All practitioners caring for children and young people under the care of the Jersey Government.
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1. Introduction

Children in care are some of our most vulnerable children due to their life experiences which have often featured abuse and neglect. They are also more likely to be reported as missing to the police. The reasons as to why children go missing from care are complex. A child or young person being missing, or not being where they are expected to be, can be an indication relating to a wide range of push or pull risk and vulnerability factors, including unhappiness, wanting to be elsewhere, mental health issues, and child exploitation.

Being missing from care can increase a child's vulnerability and risk. Understanding push and pull factors and any patterns related to a child's missing occurrences can help professionals identify potential risks and harm a child may be experiencing. Any missing occurrence should not be viewed in isolation and may be an indicator that something is not right in the child's life. All absence or missing occurrences should warrant professional attention to help safeguard children.

For some children, coming into care or moving to a different residential home can be a positive experience, alternatively it can be very challenging, and the experience may contribute to an increased risk of going missing and increased vulnerability when missing. To help reduce a child's likelihood of going missing and help create stability, carers and partner agencies should adopt a coordinated, consistent, and restorative approach to working with children, to reduce the likelihood of going missing for individual children, and all children in Jersey.

It is important that policies and procedures, and individual missing risk assessments and plans for children and young people provide clarity about expectations, roles, and agency responsibility for when children go missing from care; to ensure that professionals and carers respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns and reduce unnecessary police contact with children, which can negatively impact on them.

Whilst a missing person's report to the police is always appropriate when there is critical concern for a child's or another person's welfare and safety; carers and professionals involved with children in care should always fully consider the circumstances of a child not being where they are expected to be, and the need to make a missing person's report to the police.

Reporting a child as missing to the police can lead to children feeling punished, damage their relationships with professionals, and on occasion, result in children becoming unintentionally criminalised. Carers informed by knowledge of the child, the circumstances surrounding a missing occurrence, and robust care and safety planning are often in the best position to determine if a child whose whereabouts is unknown, is at risk of harm or poses a risk to others. When to report a child as missing to the police should be agreed in the child's home care and safety planning, and allow for a level of carer discretion, depending on the circumstance. A decision to report a child as missing, must always be undertaken with the best interests of the child in mind.

The overall aim of this framework is to ensure that all children in care receive an appropriate and timely response, when they are not where they are expected to be; and that everything possible is done by all multi agency partners to reduce risk and harm, enable a child's safe return and prevent repeat missing occurrences.

This framework cannot anticipate each situation or set of circumstances which surround every missing occurrence. Responding to children looked after who are not where they are expected to be and/or who are reported as missing, should be based on high quality individualised child centred needs-led assessments of vulnerability and risk, which inform and guide professional response.

This framework covers:

- Partnerships and Accountability
- Prevention and planning
- Responding to missing occurrences
- Escalation Policy
- When a child is found or returns.

It relates to all children under the age of 18 who are in care .

2. Partnerships and Accountability

- 2.1 Effective partnerships should ensure that all professionals and agencies are aware of their roles and responsibilities in prevention, planning, and response to children missing from care.
- 2.2 Multi-agency learning and development opportunities should be available to staff to ensure that they are confident in responding to children who go missing and are knowledgeable about the complexities relating to why children go missing, push and pull factors, contextual safeguarding, trigger events, how best to prevent missing, and how to respond to missing children who return, together with an understanding of individual agency roles and responsibilities.

Push & Pull Factors: What causes a child to go missing

Children & young people can go missing or run away for several reasons, usually because of a combination of push and pull factors.

Push Factors – Things in the home or education environment that cause significant stress for the child or young person and lead them to believe that the only option to protect themselves is to leave.

Pull Factors – Things that entice a child or young person to leave their home or education environment, usually believing that they can improve their lives in some way or meet an underlying need.

Push Factors	Pull Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Issues with their care placement• Mental Health Concerns• Physical, Emotional or Sexual Abuse• Bullying• Loneliness• Family Conflict• Parental Separation• Domestic Abuse in the home• Neglect• Parental Substance Misuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Criminal Exploitation• Sexual Exploitation• Peer Pressure• Anti-Social Behaviour• Substance Misuse• Parties / Gatherings• Visiting Family away from placement• Exploration, being in other environments may mean that a child or young person gets to explore issues such as relationships, sexuality or gender

3. Prevention and Planning

- 3.1 Many children who are in care have experienced significant abuse and trauma and have multiple vulnerabilities. They can be particularly vulnerable to going missing and extremely vulnerable when they are missing. The reasons as to why children in care go missing are often complex and multi-layered. It is therefore important that professionals and carers take appropriate action to prevent incidents occurring where possible, know how to respond if an incident does occur, and know when to report a child as missing.
- 3.2 To effectively safeguard children looked after who go missing, requires carers and agencies to work together collaboratively; to keep the child in focus, to ensure that their wishes and feelings are heard and that their needs are at the centre of safety and care planning.
- 3.3 To keep children safe, agencies and professionals need to be proactive to help prevent missing episodes. Reporting a child as missing to the police does not resolve the reasons or reduce the recurrence as to why a child was not where they were expected to be. Every effort should be made to prevent a child from going missing in the first place.
- 3.4 Agencies and carers need to provide children with accurate information from the outset of their involvement, acknowledging that children may need time and multiple opportunities to develop enough trust to share any concerns or fears that they may have. Agency investment in building and maintaining trusting relationships enables effective and meaningful professional response to children according to their individual needs and circumstances and helps children feel safe and cared for; thereby reducing the likelihood of missing occurrences.
- 3.5 As outlined in Working Together 2018, children have said that they need:
- vigilance: to have adults notice when things are troubling them
 - understanding and action: to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon
 - stability: to be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them
 - respect: to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not
 - information and engagement: to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns, and plans
 - explanation: to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response
 - support: to be provided with support in their own right, as well as a member of their family
 - advocacy: to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views
 - protection: to be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination and the right to special protection and help if an unaccompanied child seeking asylum.

These principles should inform all professional involvement, planning with and for, and response to, children looked after, including when focusing on missing.

4. Care and Safety Planning

- 4.1 Care and safety planning should include consideration of the likelihood that a child may go missing. Children should be informed of how their carer(s) may respond if their whereabouts becomes unknown. Where appropriate and possible, planning with children should always occur, to put in place strategies to help avoid them being unnecessarily reported to the police when their whereabouts is unknown.
- 4.2 Where missing episodes are a known vulnerability for a child, a multi-agency Missing Risk Assessment and Planning should be completed together with the child's carer(s) and where appropriate, with the child. They should be shared prior to a planned move, or as soon as practicable following emergency move into care.
- 4.3 When missing is a known vulnerability for a child who becomes looked after or moves to a new home, a Missing Person's Incident form ([Philomena Protocol](#)) should be completed and shared with the child's carer(s) and the police. Where previous forms have been completed, these should inform and update the new documentation.
- 4.4 Where relevant, Missing Risk Assessments, Management Plans, information gained from Return Interviews and Missing Person's Incident forms should be used to inform agreements to outline expectations, and roles and responsibilities in the event that a child goes missing.
- 4.5 Missing assessments should clarify if there is a pattern to previous missing occurrences, known trigger events, places or people the child should not visit or have contact with, together with known risk and vulnerability factors, such as child exploitation, substance misuse, offending behaviour, peer groups, and locations of concern.
- 4.6 Missing risk management planning should capture prevention planning and actions required to be undertaken if a child's whereabouts is unknown. It should also make certain that appropriate resources are available to respond to children to ensure their safety and return.
- 4.7 For children with an identified risk of missing, the child's social worker should provide carer(s) with relevant up to date information to ensure a Missing Person's Incident form ([Philomena Protocol](#)) is completed accurately and if required, relevant information can be shared with the police. The responsibility for the completion of the documentation should be agreed between the child's social worker and carer(s) during the initial care and safety planning meeting.
- 4.8 Missing assessments, plans, and incident forms ([Philomena Protocol](#)) should be reviewed regularly in multi-agency meetings, involving Children's Social Care, the police, the child's carer(s), and a health professional. They should also be reviewed in the child's Looked After Review meetings, by the child's Independent Reviewing Officer, and always after any missing occurrence.
- 4.9 Where appropriate children should be actively involved in producing their missing assessments and planning so that they can have input in their own planning and are fully

aware of the expectations of them, what professionals are worried about and what actions may be taken by agencies if they are not where they are expected to be, and /or they are reported as missing.

- 4.10 Not all risks to children are necessarily known and information required to inform decision making when responding to a child who is not where they are supposed to be is often contextual.

5. Responding to Missing Occurrences

Levels of Intervention			
Assessed level of concern		Intervention	Actions and Outcomes
No Intervention	The carer is not concerned for the child's safety, or the safety of others based on the information they have about the child and the circumstances of the missing occurrence	Based on the information known about the child and the circumstances of the missing occurrence, the carer makes an informed decision to wait some time, to see if the child returns of their own accord.	<p>Actions</p> <p>(a) The carer waits a reasonable time to see if the child returns of their own accord.</p> <p>Outcomes</p> <p>a) The child returns of their own accord.</p> <p>(b) The child contacts the carer (or another) and child agrees to either return home independently or be collected by the carer.</p> <p>(c) The child contacts the carer and what the child says raises the level of concern to either carer intervention or police intervention.</p> <p>(d) The carer receives information that raises the level of concern to either carer intervention or police intervention. (</p> <p>e) The child does not return within a reasonable time, so the level of concern raises to carer intervention.</p>
Carer Intervention	The carer has some concerns about the child and their whereabouts, but at the outset of the missing occurrence the carer does not have any immediate concerns about their safety or the safety of others.	The carer takes responsibility for trying to locate the child and ensure their safe return.	<p>Actions</p> <p>(a) The carer considers if there has been any precursor behaviour or trigger incident that warrants the child being immediately reported to the police as missing.</p> <p>(b) The carer/child's social worker continually tries to contact the child by phone, text, and social media.</p> <p>(c) The carer undertakes a search of the home and surrounding areas</p> <p>(d) The carer undertakes a search of the place the child was expected to be and the place the child was last seen (or agrees</p>

			<p>with the child's social worker who will do this if they are unable to).</p> <p>(e) The carer/child's social worker contacts family and friends.</p> <p>(f) If possible and safe to do, the carer/ child's social worker visits locations and addresses where the child may be.</p> <p>(g) The carer and the child's social worker continue to liaise until the child is found or returns.</p> <p>Outcomes</p> <p>(a) The child returns of their own accord. (b) The child contacts the carer (or another).</p> <p>(c) The carer contacts the child.</p> <p>(d) Contact is made and the child agrees to return home independently.</p> <p>(e) Contact is made and the child agrees to be collected. This is arranged by/between the carer and the child's social worker.</p> <p>(f) Contact is made and what the child says raises the level of concern to police intervention, so the child is reported as missing to the police.</p> <p>(g) The carer/ child's social worker receives information that raises the level of concern to police intervention, so the child is reported as missing to the police.</p> <p>(h) The child is located but to ensure their safe return / the safety of others, police support is required so the police are contacted.</p> <p>(i) The carer/ child's social worker has conducted reasonable actions to locate the child and allowed the child a reasonable time to return of their own accord, but the child has not been located, so the level of concern raises to police intervention and the child is reported as missing to the police.</p> <p>(j) If the child is reported as missing to the police, the carer/ child's social worker shares the relevant missing documentation with the police</p>
Police Intervention	Based on the information the carer has about the child	The carer/child's social worker reports the child as missing to the police.	Actions

	<p>and the circumstances of the missing occurrence, the carer is worried about the child's immediate safety.</p>		<p>(a) The carer/child's social worker shares their concerns with the police.</p> <p>(b) Where applicable, the child/ child's social worker shares the child's Missing Assessment / Plan / Incident form with the police.</p> <p>(c) The police complete a risk assessment and either record the child as missing or inform the carer/ child's social worker that they disagree that level of risk lies within the police intervention band of the levels of intervention model and delays police deployment.</p> <p>(d) If the police have recorded the child as missing, the police conduct enquiries to locate the child.</p> <p>(e) The carer /the child's social worker continues to try and locate /contact the child.</p> <p>(f) If the police have delayed police deployment and the carer/ child's social worker disagrees with that decision, the carer/ child's social worker escalates the case to the Out of Hours Manager on duty who will liaise with the Police Duty officer.</p> <p>(g) The police, the carer and the child's social worker continue to liaise until the child is found /returns.</p> <p>(h) When the child has returned or has been located, a Safe and Well Check and Independent Return Interview takes place.</p>
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Please see [Appendix 1](#) for a **Responding to Missing Occurrences Flowchart**

- 5.1 Responding effectively to a child missing from care requires a partnership approach in which the police, carers, Children's Social Care, and other partner agencies work together in the best interests of the child to ensure their wellbeing and safety.

"UNCRC Article 3 – The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children."

- 5.2 Agency response to individual children and any missing occurrence should be informed by professional judgement and up to date multi-agency needs-led assessments, to ensure that missing children are responded to appropriately, their voices are heard, and that they are safeguarded from harm.
- 5.3 The level of intervention required when a child is not where they are expected to be should therefore be proportionate to the concerns held, together with the child's assessed vulnerability and the risk relating to the missing occurrence. It should be recognised by all involved in responding to a missing child that the assessed risk to a child and the situation can alter rapidly. Carers and agency actions and responses therefore need to adapt accordingly.
- 5.4 When a child is not where they are expected to be, their carer holds the initial responsibility to contact and locate the child to ensure their safety and wellbeing and where possible their return, as outlined in the above Levels of Intervention model. This includes undertaking an initial search of the child's home and any grounds; as well as attempting to contact the child's friends, family members and known associates (where appropriate) to establish the child's whereabouts. Carers making the enquires should keep a record of all the actions that they undertake, which should also include notifying the child's social worker as soon as possible after realising a child's whereabouts is unknown. Arrangements about contacting a child's family if the child's whereabouts is unknown to the carer should be outlined in the care and safety plan.
- 5.5 Where a carer due to practical reasons is unable to undertake physical searches, contingency planning regarding how and who should undertake these should have been agreed in the child's care and safety Planning /Missing Assessment /Plan. Where prior agreement is not in place (i.e., a first missing occurrence) the carer should discuss how physical searches can be undertaken with the child's social worker.
- 5.6 When a child who is in care is not where they are expected to be, carers should always discuss with the manager support to help locate the child and to develop a plan for when the child returns. The child's social worker should be kept informed throughout the time a child's whereabouts is unknown/ they are missing.
- 5.7 If the whereabouts of a missing child is known and there is a concern that they are at immediate risk of harm and/or may pose a risk to others, and/ or their location is assessed by the carer /child's social worker to pose a risk to professionals, the police should be contacted so that an agreement as how best to proceed can be reached. All agreements reached should take full account of the welfare and safety of the child and of others.

- 5.8 If a child is missing outside of office hours, the carer should notify the Children's Services Out of Hours duty team and if relevant, of their return.
- 5.9 It is important that shared responsibility is assumed for all children who go missing from care by partner agencies, and that appropriate information is shared in a timely manner and that this is continuous until the child's safe return.

Multi-agency meetings

- If a child is missing on 3 or more occasions within 30 days a multi-agency strategy meeting will be triggered to understand what is going for the child and take forward any relevant actions to support them.
- A weekly multi-agency missing from care meeting takes place to understand the reasons for children who have been missing in the 7 days prior & to discuss actions to prevent further missing occasions.

Please see [Appendix 4](#) for the **Multi-agency Meetings for Children who are missing from care – Terms of Reference**

6. Reporting a child as missing to the Police

- 6.1 When a child looked after is not where they are expected to be, there is an expectation that their carer(s) considers what action is required in accordance with the child's care plan, and their knowledge of the child together with, the individual circumstances of the missing occurrence. Carers should always fully consider if it is appropriate, proportionate and in the best interests of a child to contact the police.
- 6.2 A significant number of children looked after are reported as missing from care to the police on more than one occasion, some repeatedly. Whilst carers and other professionals should be mindful not to fall into a pattern of automatically reporting children whose whereabouts are frequently unknown as missing to the police, multi-agency response should always be based on knowledge of a child, their assessed level of risk and vulnerability, their missing risk management plan, and the circumstances of the missing occurrence, including any trigger events.
- 6.3 Unless there has been a trigger incident that creates critical concern for the child's or another person's welfare and safety and /or there is an agreed multi agency missing management plan which indicates due to a child's vulnerability the police should be contacted from the outset of a missing occurrence, there is an expectation that a child's carer undertakes all reasonable actions to contact, locate and where possible arrange for a child's return, as outlined in the Level of Intervention model.
- 6.4 In circumstances where a carer is concerned about the length of time a child's whereabouts has been unknown, and there is increasing concern for the child's safety, the carer, or the child's social worker should report the child as missing to the police.

- 6.5 If a child is reported as missing and the police question the appropriateness of the report, the police should engage with the reporting person to discuss actions taken and the concerns held. Professional disagreement regarding as to whether a report is warranted or not, should not result in the concerns held by the carer/Children's Social Care not being fully considered, nor should it lead to no action being taken to locate the child / ensure their safety.
- 6.6 If the professional disagreement cannot be resolved the carer/ child's social worker should immediately escalate the matter to the out of Hours manager who will liaise with the Police Duty officer.
- 6.7 On occasions where there is disagreement, or where the carer is unable to undertake action to locate the child, the police may need to act in the best interests of the child. Once professionals are assured of a child's wellbeing, where required, the police and the reporting agency should arrange a follow up conversation to discuss the basis of any disagreement. If there are ongoing concerns regarding agency action or inaction, these should be escalated via the Safeguarding Partnership Board's Escalation Policy.
- 6.8 Children whose whereabouts are unknown by their carer will not always be automatically recorded and responded to as a missing child; the police will need to be satisfied that:
- robust enquires have been made by the carer to establish the child's whereabouts; or
 - there is critical concern for the child's or another person's welfare and safety that warrants immediate police intervention
- 6.9 Following a missing child report being made to the police, there remains an expectation that the carer/Children's Social Care will continue to try and make contact, locate, and ensure the safe return of the child.
- 6.10 When making a missing person's report to the police the carer / child's social worker should share a copy of an up-to-date Missing Person's Incident form ([Philomena Protocol](#)) to inform the police response.
- 6.11 Once the police have recorded a Missing Person's report, they will, as a minimum:
- liaise with the carer about what actions have been undertaken
 - complete a risk assessment and use this to inform what actions will be taken
 - contact the child's social worker / the Children's Services out of hours duty team, to ascertain the child's risk and vulnerability and plan accordingly
 - create and record a plan of immediate actions
 - agree a way of ensuring the carer/child's social worker can share any increased concerns directly with the responding Police Officer/relevant Senior Officer
 - agree joint actions and pathways for maintaining contact and information sharing
 - set a time to review the Police Risk Assessment and activity (a review of the risk and circumstances may take place before this time if the police receive new information which suggests the risk of harm to the child or others has increased).

Please see [Appendix 2](#) for further information

7. Abduction

If it is suspected that a child has been abducted from care, States of Jersey Police would be the lead agency in the investigation and recovery, unless there are Parental Responsibility (PR) issues. In this case Children's service would then look at getting a recovery order through the court system. This is supported in the [Children's \(Jersey\) Law 2002](#).

If it is suspected that a child has been abducted, it is important to consider the following:

- Holding a strategy meeting immediately to consider the information available & think about where the child may be taken;
- Partners should be very clear of the person(s) of concerns, who they may be with and the level of risk posed to the child from them.

8. When a Child is Found or Returns

- 8.1 From the moment it is apparent that a child looked after is missing, all those responsible for their welfare and safety should liaise, to start planning for the child's return.
- 8.2 When a child is located, but does not return of their own accord, the responsibility for their safe return lies with the carer or Children's Social care. If there is a known or assessed risk associated with this, how to proceed should be discussed with the police, to determine if a safeguarding response is required.
- 8.3 On their return a child should always be warmly welcomed and any immediate physical needs they may have should be attended to. Children can be a victim of a crime, even if they also appear to be a perpetrator of a crime. Where it is suspected that a child may have been a victim of a crime, carers should seek to preserve any physical evidence and notify the police of their concerns.
- 8.4 Where a child who was reported to the police as missing returns, without the knowledge of the police, the police should be notified immediately.
- 8.5 Arrangements for an Independent Return Interview should be confirmed between the child's social worker and carer, together with an agreement as to who will notify professionals and the child's family (where appropriate) of the child's return.

9. Safe and Well Check

- 9.1 The police have a responsibility to ensure that a Safe and Well Check is undertaken when a child who was reported as missing, is located, or returns. The purpose of a Safe and Well Check in relation to individual children is to: identify any ongoing vulnerability or risk factors which may have contributed to the child going missing and could contribute to repeat occurrences; to try and establish if the child has suffered any harm whilst absent; and to establish information that may assist in locating the child if they go missing again. More widely, the information gained can inform strategic activity, and disruption activity against perpetrators.

- 9.2 A Safe and Well Check should normally be carried out in person as soon as practicable. A record of the interview should document the child's emotional and physical presentation, where the child went, who they spent time with, any safeguarding concerns to inform the child's care and safeguarding plan; and any information which may be relevant to the investigation of a crime.
- 9.3 Although Safe and Well Checks will normally be carried out in person by the police, on some occasions this may not be practical. On other occasions it may not be in the best interests of the child as it may be counterproductive by exposing the child to avoidable interaction with the police. For many children it could be that it is assessed as appropriate for their carer or a named trusted adult in a child's life to conduct the Safe and Well Check and/or this is in line with the child's wishes. Who will conduct the interview should be agreed and documented on each report.

10. Independent Return Interviews

- 10.1 All children who have been reported as missing to the police must be offered an Independent Return Interview within 72 hours of a child's return. Only a child has the right to refuse their Return Interview.
- 10.2 Return Interviews should be carried out by a trained professional not involved with care of the child. They should provide the child with a safe space in which they can talk about any worries or fears that they may have. They also provide a key opportunity to learn about the reasons why a child went missing, to support and safeguard a child, identify risk, and to reduce the risk of future missing episodes. A Return Interview should therefore be a child centred conversation which takes a supportive, active listening approach.
- 10.3 For children looked after Independent Return Interviews should explore how the child feels about their home and determine if the home is a 'push' factor with regards to the child going missing. Any information received which suggests it is a factor should always be shared with the child's social worker and Independent Reviewing Officer.
- 10.4 Information gained from Return Interviews should inform a child's Missing Assessment and Management Plan, together with their care and safety planning, and it should be considered in the child's Looked After Reviews.
- 10.5 Information gained in Return Interviews that is relevant to safeguarding a child, or others, should be shared with the police by the child's social worker or independent provider.

11. Off Island Placements

If a child who resides in an out of jurisdiction placement the same principles & practice applies as on Island but with the police force of where the child resides being responsible.

- The off Island placement will follow it's missing child procedure & will also notify the Jersey Out of Hours Social work service

- The off Island placement will inform Jersey Children Services of the child's return
- Arrangements will be made with the Local Authority for a return home interview to be offered & carried out within 72hrs

12. Further reading

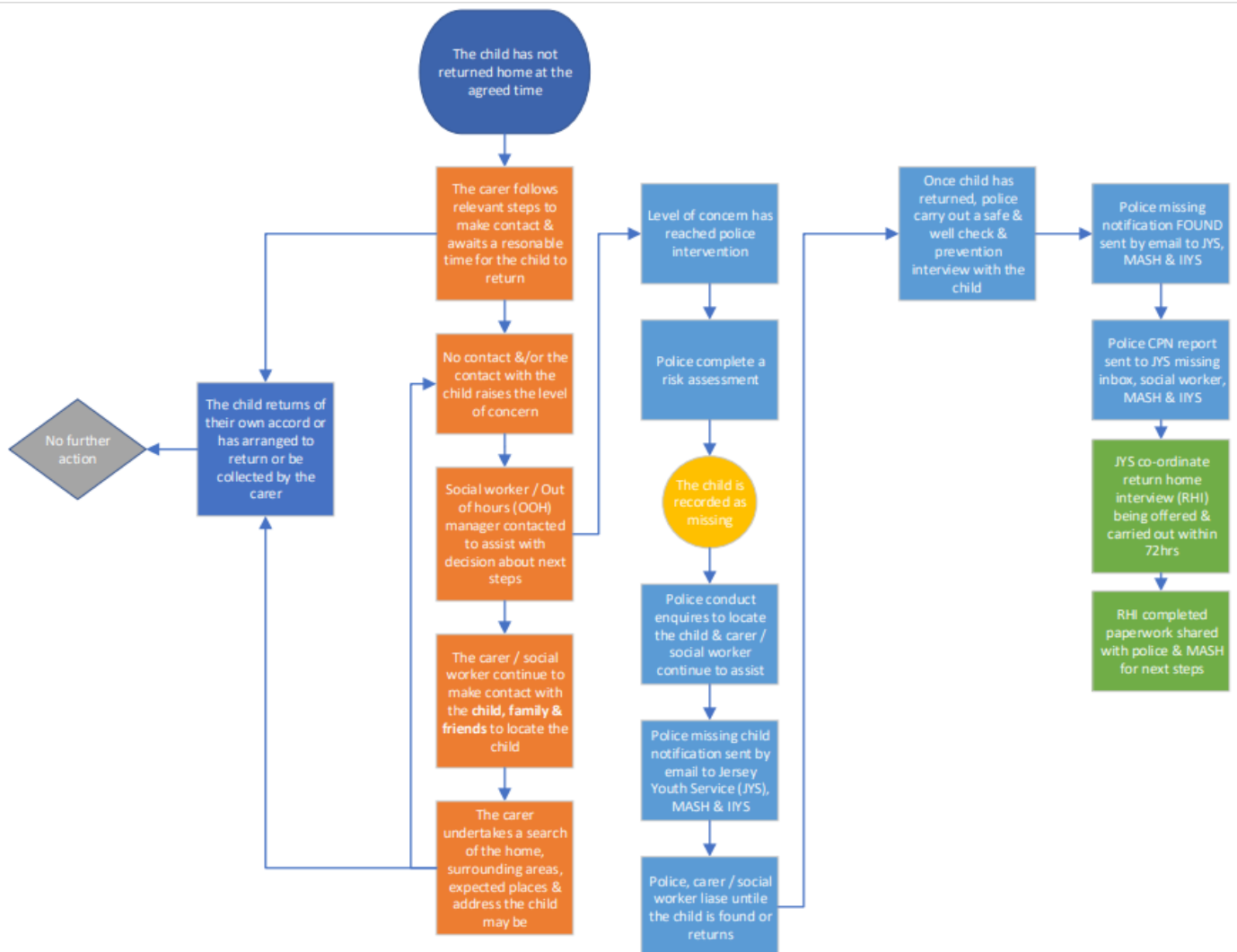
[UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - UNICEF UK](#)

SPB [Child Sexual Abuse/ Exploitation Strategy 2022-2024](#)

SPB [Continuum of Need](#)

[College of Police \(UK\) Missing Persons](#)

Appendix 1. Responding to Missing Occurrences



Appendix 2–Carer Guidance:

Reporting a child in your care missing

A child going missing can be a warning sign of a range of serious risks. Some children who go missing may be harmed while away and patterns of missing episodes can help to identify ongoing risks they may be facing. It is therefore important that professionals and carers prioritise the response to missing and know how and when to report an incident to the police.

However, there are also risks with inappropriately reporting a child missing. Over-involving the police in a child's life by reporting them missing can unnecessarily damage the child's relationships with professionals and their carers and can bring them into unnecessary contact with the police.

Looked After Children are more likely than other children to be reported missing. Careful thought should always be given to how to prevent a child in your care from going missing, and, if they are not where they are supposed to be, whether and when they need to be reported as missing to the police. Decisions and actions taken should always be focussed on the child's best interests and what will best help to keep them safe.

Planning and prevention

Every effort should be made to prevent children from going missing in the first place. Good communication; trusting relationships; and effective planning are all vital to prevention.

You should always feel supported in how you look after a child in your care, including when they are reported missing. A child's home plan should clearly set out what needs to happen if their whereabouts are unknown: what actions should be taken, and when they should be reported to the police as missing. This should be reviewed regularly to take account of any changes in the child's circumstances, their vulnerability and any identified risks. You should be encouraged to inform these plans and to feel confident in what is expected of you.

When the child moves in you should have a conversation with them to explain any expectations about times to return home and what may happen if they don't return as expected. Potential triggers should be openly discussed with them (for example wanting to see family or friends, or unhappiness with a curfew) and genuine efforts should be made to avoid these triggers causing the child to go missing. Conversations with children should be warm and supportive to enable them to share their views. They should be made aware that if they are reported as missing it would be because of concerns for their safety, not because they are in trouble.

When a child in your care is not where they are supposed to be

When a child is late returning home, or goes out without permission, any known risks to the child and the urgency of the situation should be fully considered, together with the information in the child's home plan and your agency or home's guidance, policies, and procedures.

You should think about each individual missing incident separately, taking account of circumstances, trigger events and if child's recent behaviour indicates an increased cause for concern.

If you are concerned that the child will come to serious harm, you may need to report them as missing to the police immediately. If not, it is likely that in the first instance there will be an expectation that you take steps to try and contact the child and check that they are okay yourself.

You should keep a record of the actions that you take both before contacting the police (if required) and afterwards; so that everyone involved in locating the child and ensuring their safe return is aware of what has been done by whom.

Keeping records of actions, you have taken is important because if you do contact the police to report a child as missing it is likely that they will ask what steps have already been taken to try and contact or locate the child. They may also suggest other actions that you could take. It is important that children feel cared for and know that carers are concerned about them and making all reasonable efforts to find them.

If a carer doesn't think a child is safe and feels that the police are not taking their concerns seriously and are not accepting that the child is missing, a carer can and should challenge this. It might be appropriate to ask to speak to a senior officer as well as contacting the child's social worker to let them know your concerns. No child should fall through the gaps and all professionals involved should take concerns seriously.

The Levels of Intervention model below provides guidance for carers when responding to a child whose whereabouts are unknown.

The levels of concern about a child and the action that needs to be taken may change quickly considering emerging information. The three categories outlined in this model are fluid and progression through them may not be linear, for example if a very serious risk is identified carers should jump to police intervention immediately.

No intervention

You are not concerned about the child's safety based on the information you know about them and the circumstances of this incident.

The carer decides to wait for the child to return of their own accord.

Carer intervention

You have some concerns and want to ensure that they are okay but at this time you do not have any reason to believe they are going to come to harm. You have considered information contained in the child's plan.

You take steps yourself to locate them and check they are safe.

The child is not where they are expected to be. The carer accepts responsibility for contacting and/or searching for the child to ensure their safety and return. The circumstances, and level of concern do not justify police intervention at the time.

Police intervention

You are worried about the child and have been unable to contact them or, if you have contacted them, don't think they are safe.

There are serious concerns about the child's safety. The police have a duty to assist.

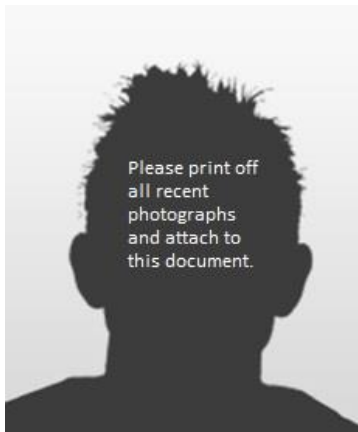
JERSEY PROTOCOL
MISSING PERSON
INCIDENT



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

This form is interactive and must be completed electronically. Upon completion, it must be stored as its own version electronically. It should be updated regularly electronically and part 2 fully completed following a missing report. This form should only ever be printed on the request of a representative of States of Jersey Police following the young person being reported missing.

Part 1 - (to be completed when it has been identified the individual is at risk of going missing)

Name: Full				
Preferred name:				
Date of birth:		Age:		
Ethnicity:				
Gender/identifies as:				
Current address:				
Postcode:				
Child's first language: <i>(Consider if a translator is required)</i>				
Patent/Carer names and contact details:				
Details of Care Order:				
Social Worker name & contact Details:				

Professionals working with the child:	
GP name and address:	
Health condition(s):	
Medication required:	
Implications of not taking medication:	
Date of last Child Exploitation (CE) Toolkit completed:	
Evidence of Child Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation, County Lines, Modern Day Slavery, Radicalisation	
Any associated risks, i.e., Drugs, Alcohol, Mental Health, Self-Harm, Suicidal, Weapons, Violence: Please provide further details (i.e. dates and times)	

Previous home addresses:	1.	
	2.	
	3.	

School/Educational Establishment attended:	1.	
	2.	
	3.	

Friendship/peer groups (names and addresses):	
<p>Circumstances of missing episode inc any indication of planning. (Request of additional monies, become secretive, start changing plans last minute, changing clothing, applying makeup, becoming aggressive etc. Last time seen and who by, last time contacted and by what means and response.):</p> <p><i>See Push and Pull factors in Missing Children from Care Framework</i></p>	
Any Curfew/conditions in place i.e., electronic tag, bails conditions.	
Previous locations found: (Provide all recent information – List all locations)	
Any Significant dates – example birthdays of parents/deaths etc.	
General Appearance	
General description:	
Height:	
Weight:	
Build:	
Hair Colour:	
Eyes	
Jewellery	
Distinguishing features: (e.g., scars/tattoos)	

Distinguishing features – tattoos/ birth marks/ piercings broken down *Feature/what it is/and where it is (i.e., ear pierced/wears a gold stud/both ears OR Tattoo/dragon with heart/top of left leg)*

Habits:	
Hobbies	

Part 2 - (to be completed when the person has been reported as missing)

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:	

Significant places where child may frequent:	
----------------------------------------------	--

<u>Details of any Current Child Abductions Notes</u>	
------------------------------------------------------	--

Has the person got any money?		If so, how much?	
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Is the money cash or bank card?			
---------------------------------	--	--	--

Has the person Got a Bank Account:		Have you got access to this account? (If not, who has)	
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Has the person got a mobile phone?	
------------------------------------	--

Number:		Network:	
Make		Model:	
IMEI Number:		Mac Address	

Has the child previously left or tried to leave Jersey? <i>Give details of when, how, relevant contacts and reason for leave/travel</i>			
How does the young person normally travel? (i.e. bus, foot, bike, electric scooter.)			
Does the person have photographic ID?			
Does the person have a bus pass/bike licence:		Provide details: e.g. Pass number and Issuer.	
Does the person have access to vehicle(s):		Provide details: e.g. Registration Number/ Driver etc.	

Does the person have a social Media Accounts (Provide Details):					
Social media site:		Username:		Do you have access to the password?	
Social media site:		Username:		Do you have access to the password?	
Social media site:		Username:		Do you have access to the password?	
Social media site:		Username:		Do you have access to the password?	
Social media site:		Username:		Do you have access to the password?	

Time, date and location last seen:	
Please provide evidence to support each of the above	

Does anyone pose a risk to YP (Please provide evidence):		
Does the YP pose risk to anyone (Please provide evidence):		

Media release?		On-call manager aware?	
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Persons informed of child missing (example Parent/carer, Social Worker, Professionals involved etc):

--

Details of other staff on duty at the time of missing report.

--

Any other information that may be of help to the Police:

--

This section should be completed in conjunction with the premises searched Form.

Have you searched the address the young person is missing from?

--	--

Have you completed and marked off the areas searched as per premises plan?

--	--

Name and position of person searching:

Signature of person searching and completing plan:

--	--

Have you searched the young person's bedroom?

--	--

Name and position of person searching:

Signature of person searching:

--	--

Please detail any information or items located:

--

Please detail any information or items missing:

--

This should be completed in conjunction with the *Risk assessed locations & contacts to assist to locate a missing child 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 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 4. Multi-agency Meetings for Children who are missing from care – Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference

- All missing from care episodes and unauthorised absences in the previous seven days and actions taken to prevent and understand each episode.
- The actions residential staff have taken to locate each child before they were reported as missing.
- Review of what assessments have been carried out following missing and absent episodes, and how this information has been shared.
- Responses for groups facing specific risks of going missing.
- Review of safe and how safe and well checks have been conducted.
- Arrangements for information sharing between CYPES, SOJP and other agencies.
- Details of preventative approaches to avoid further instances of unauthorised absences and missing episodes.
- Details of work with children in care, so that they understand the risks associated with going missing and the support available to them.
- AOB

Each Registered Manager is expected to have a thorough and up to date understanding of the needs and issues of each young person at the meeting.

Attendance

Children's Social Care
Residential Homes
Health
SOJP
Education
Probation
JYS

Agenda/Data

Discussion is informed by a report created by the Children's Social Care Informatics team which is circulated to attendees the evening before.

Actions

Actions from the meeting are taken forward by relevant agencies with oversight from the children's social care teams.