

## Request

I am currently undertaking a scoping review to find out the answer to the question: "Why do children in residential care go missing, and where do they go whilst missing?"

I write to request any information that you have on this topic, which may include internal reports or evaluations of the following:

- Innovative practices for dealing with missing children from residential care.
- Strategies used to target resources to missing children from residential care.
- Spatial behaviour of children who go missing from residential care (i.e., where they go whilst missing)
- Experiences and perceptions of partnership working with children's residential care homes and how this can be (or has been) improved.
- Facilitators and barriers to identifying the reasons why children go missing from residential care.
- Prevention activities in relation to children who go missing from residential care.
- The effectiveness of Return Home Interviews and The Philomena Protocol with children who go missing from residential care in identifying the reasons why they go missing, and where they go whilst missing.

## Response

The Missing from Home Service are embedded within Wigan Complex Safeguarding Team to ensure a co-ordinated, multi-agency collaborative approach is undertaken in identifying those children who are at risk of or subject to child exploitation.

Wigan Missing from Home Team ensures that children who go missing are independently interviewed within 72 hours of notification. Offering Independent Return Home Interviews (RHI) with the child helps to establish support that may be required, as well as preventing repeat incidents. Information gathered from return interviews can be used to inform the identification, referral, and assessment of any child sexual/criminal exploitation concerns and mapping.

Trauma informed and Contextual Safeguarding approaches are embedded as part of response to children who have been missing from home or care, and completion of return home interviews provide the opportunity to reflect the voice of the child, highlight any further support needs.

- There is MFH protocol in place between Children's services and Police.

In respect of where children go whilst missing, there is no linear response to this. However, from information in return home interviews, children often gravitate back to the community in which their family members/connections are.

From a missing from home service perspective, the partnership working between children's services and children's home can be varied dependant on the home.

Wigan Complex Safeguarding Team & Missing from Home service provide support to all children's homes (Private and LA) in respect of training, advice and guidance.

The Philomena protocol is recommended to be used by Children's' homes, their use is dependent on the home. Wigan GMP will complete trigger plans for children considered as high-risk missing children.