

Looked- after children and young people

Care providers'
information pack

Working
together to
keep children
and young
people safe



City of
Stoke-on-Trent



www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk



www.staffsscb.org.uk

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Introduction

Aims of the pack

This pack has been designed by Staffordshire Police, in conjunction with partners involved in children's social care and local care providers.

As well as useful information around responding to risks faced by looked-after children and young people (CYP), there are a number of forms and feedback sheets for use by care staff.

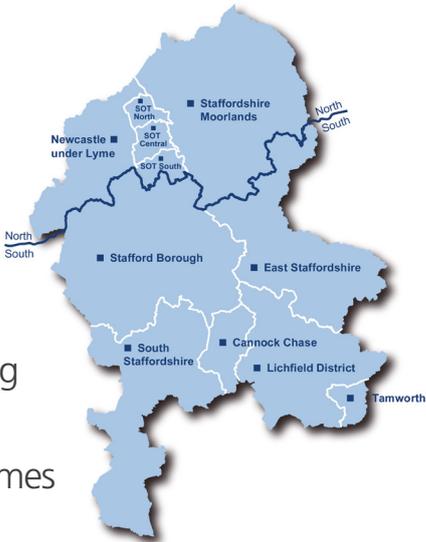
The information pack aims to:

- provide information to care providers and looked-after CYP to promote awareness of the roles and responsibilities of all agencies involved in safeguarding
- build effective relationships between the police, care providers and looked-after CYP in Staffordshire
- enable a consistent approach to all incidents involving looked-after CYP as outlined in the 'joint protocol on children who run away or go missing from home or care' and the 'joint protocol to reduce prosecution of looked-after children'
- improve partnerships to ensure positive outcomes for CYP
- create opportunities for CYP to have their say and provide feedback to agencies around how they are treated.



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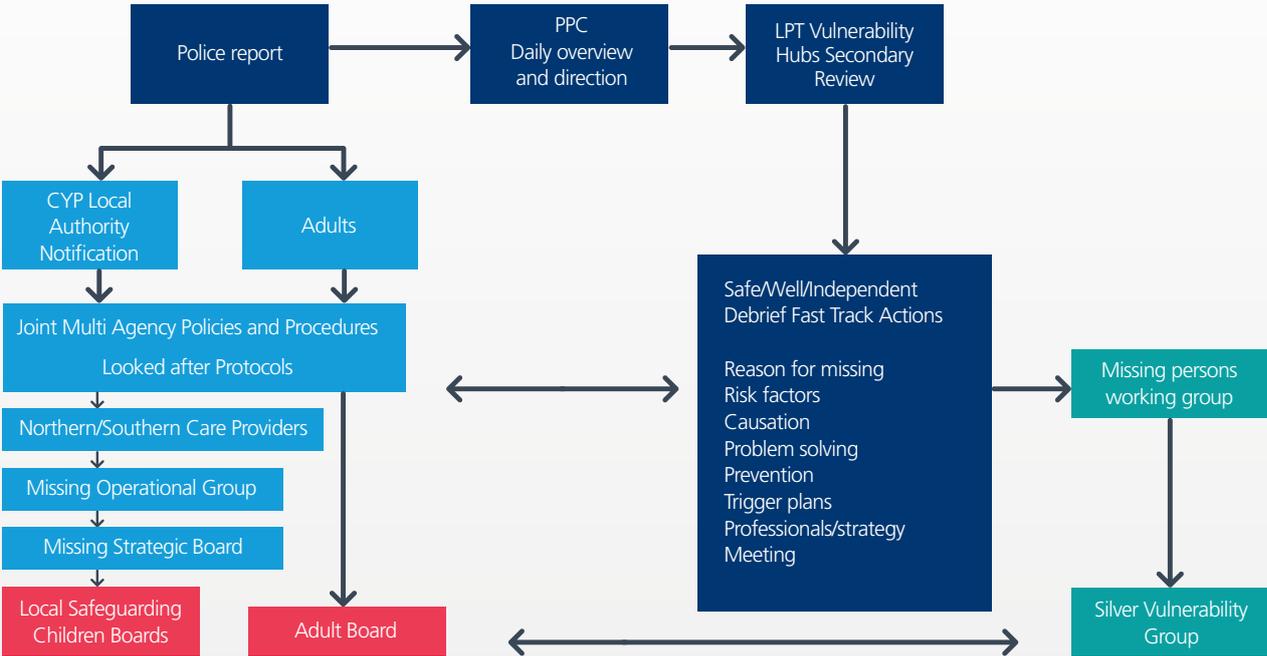
Work with looked-after CYP so far



- 120 private care homes across Staffordshire
- Over 25 individual/private care providers (not including local authority)
- Seven main private providers with more than two homes
- Care Today is currently the largest private provider
- A number of supported accommodation premises within Staffordshire that provide care for 16/17 year olds to assist with transition into independent living
- Police officer/police community support officer (PCSO) in place for all premises. Development of single point of contact (SPOC) role
- Quarterly care managers meetings with newly-formed southern group
- Six joint partnership workshops every year - this has seen well over 600 people so far
- Force event - over 100 delegates from across the social care sector.

Multi-agency structures and support

Processes and Governance



Definitions and risk categories

Definitions

Missing person Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be a subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or others.

Absent A person not at a place where they are expected or required to be and there is no apparent risk of danger to either the subject or the public. A person is absent if there is an expectation that the individual will return of their own accord without the need for a police investigation.

Repeat missing/absent person A person who has been reported as missing or absent on more than one occasion within the previous 12 months.

Long-term missing person A person who has been reported missing for at least 28 days.

Risk categories

High risk

The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the missing person 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.

Medium risk

The risk posed is likely to place the person in danger or they are a threat to themselves or others.

Low risk

The apparent threat of danger to the missing person or the public is low.

Absent

There is an expectation that the person will return of their own accord without the need for any police involvement and there is no apparent risk.

Looked-after CYP in Staffordshire

Missing

There are an average of **10** missing reports per day

72% of missing reports relate to under 18-year-olds

40% of missing reports relate to looked-after CYP

Absent

There are an average of **2** absent reports per day

94% of absent reports relate to under 18-years-olds

75% of absent reports relate to looked-after CYP

The majority of calls from care homes/supported accommodation relate to missing/absent reports.



In the UK a child is reported missing every 3 minutes

Actions prior to contacting the police

The responsible (placing) local authority, as the corporate parent for looked-after CYP, has a duty of care for their safety and wellbeing and this continues even when a CYP, through the service provider, is reported missing or absent.

The responsible (placing) local authority will work and liaise with the police and care providers to locate the CYP. They will do this by sharing relevant information, intelligence and background history that may assist in locating them.

If the location of the CYP is known or suspected, it is the responsibility of the care provider to collect them. Police assistance will be considered where there are concerns about the safety of the CYP and/or staff. These circumstances, however, would not mean that the CYP should be categorised as missing.

Staffordshire Police should not be contacted until the person reporting has completed all reasonable checks to locate the CYP unless a significant risk is identified.

In the first instance, efforts should be made to locate the CYP, providing that it is safe to do so. These enquiries are what would reasonably be expected of a parent/guardian such as:

- a) Complete searches of their bedroom and the house (including any grounds and outbuildings)
- b) Ascertain if any clothing, cash, mobile phones, medication etc. are missing
- c) Speak to any other people at the house who may know where they have gone to
- d) Contact people, such as friends or relatives, and their allocated social worker, to explore where they may have gone to
- e) Check any locations that you suspect they may have gone to, provided it is safe to do so
- f) Carry out checks of social media.

Making a report to the police

Whenever a report is made to the police regarding a CYP who is missing, a risk assessment is completed by a police control room operator.

This risk assessment helps to identify the level of risk that is posed to or by the CYP and to determine the most appropriate police response.

It is, therefore, vitally important that as much information as possible is obtained during that first contact.

Questions you may want to consider, and may be asked by the call taker, are:

- What is the risk to the CYP or others?
- Have you contacted the home/supported accommodation manager? If so, what were their views and what action have they taken to locate the CYP?
- Has the CYP's social worker been contacted?
- What attempts have been made to contact the CYP?
- What has been done prior to ringing the police? (i.e. next of kin, family, other contacts, home visit etc)
- Are you able to meet officers should we require you to do so?
- In brief, please describe your concerns regarding the CYP and your expectations. Any other factors that you wish us to take into consideration?

The questions over the next few pages are those asked following every report of a missing or absent CYP. They are included to support you in providing the most relevant information at the earliest opportunity in order to locate them safe and well.

There may be other additional information that you feel the police need to be made aware of.

Missing from		Full name	
Date of birth		When were they last seen? Time and location	
Who saw them last?		Who were they with?	

Description			
Gender		Build	
Height		Hair length	
Eye colour		Complexion	
Ethnic origin		Clothing	
Distinguishing marks/scars/tattoos		Footwear/accessories	
Language spoken/understood			
Further information			
Any disabilities? Any major health issues e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, mental health issues etc?		Are they on any medication? Do they have this with them? Are they able to self-administer?	
Mobile number and network		Facebook or any other social media account details	
Any locations that they frequent?		Any indication they are likely to harm themselves, commit suicide or pose any risk to others?	
Preferred communication methods		Religion	
Sexual orientation			

Risk assessment questions

Are they vulnerable due to their age, infirmity or any other factor?		Are the circumstances of them going missing different from normal behaviour patterns?	
Are they suspected to be the subject of a significant crime in progress e.g. abduction?		Is there any reason for them to have gone missing?	
Are there any indications that they have made preparations to leave?		What were they intending to do when they were last seen (e.g. going to the shops) and did they fail to complete their intentions?	
Is there a Trigger plan?		What enquiries have you made so far? What enquiries are you going to make?	
Are there any family/ relationships problems or recent history of family conflict and/or abuse?		Are they a victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse?	
Are they the subject of any Child Protection/ Child In Need plans?		Have they previously been exposed to harm when they have gone missing?	

Risk assessment questions

<p>Do you believe that they have the ability to interact safely with others in an unknown environment?</p>		<p>Is there any recent or ongoing bullying or harassment e.g. racial, sexual, homophobic, or local community concerns regarding cultural issues?</p>	
<p>Were they involved in a violent or racist incident prior to their disappearance?</p>		<p>Are there any school, college, unemployment or financial problems?</p>	
<p>Are there any family/relationships problems or recent history of family conflict and/or abuse?</p>		<p>Are they a victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse?</p>	
<p>Are there any other unlisted factors that you believe should be considered by the police? Is there anything else you think we should know? (Please consider factors such as child sexual exploitation, gang membership, whether you would consider them to be vulnerable?</p>			

Escalation process

Staffordshire Police will continually risk assess any person who is reported as missing.

There may be occasions when the care home/supported accommodation reporting may disagree with the assessment made by the police control room operator. Whilst it is expected that these occasions will be few and far between, it is important to ensure that there is a robust procedure in place to challenge such decisions.

The escalation process below provides some clear guidance for both the care home/supported accommodation and Staffordshire Police to follow should any disagreement occur.

1. In the first instance, the person reporting will be referred to the police control room manager who will review the report, decision and risk assessment completed
2. The second line of escalation, should the person reporting continue to be dissatisfied with the decision, will be to the Local Policing Team sergeant who will review the report, decision and risk assessment completed.

Scaled intervention meetings

The 'Joint protocol on children who go missing from home or care', agreed with both Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire local authorities, stipulates that a child who has been missing three, five or nine times in a rolling 90-day period will trigger a multi-agency intervention meeting. It is the responsibility of the CYP's social worker to arrange the scaled intervention meetings, however the police will also request a meeting when required. The relevant social worker will chair the three in 90 days meeting, their manager will chair the five in 90 days meeting and their senior manager will chair the nine in 90 days meeting.

The meeting is a multi-agency meeting aimed at problem solving and preventing future missing episodes. For CYP who are placed in Staffordshire by other local authorities, these meetings should be convened and attended by the responsible (placing) social worker.

It should be noted, however, that the number of incidents, is not the only reason to launch an intervention or to escalate the level of intervention.

The following are other occasions when interventions are also required:

- Any case where the risks involved in even a single future missing episode is very high
- Cases where it has been identified that immediate action is necessary to ensure the well-being of the person
- A quick succession of missing episodes eradicating the need for 90 days to elapse.

Safe and well checks

Once a missing CYP has been located, or returned home of their own accord, the care provider should contact Staffordshire Police as soon as possible.

Should any care provider suspect that a serious offence has occurred whilst the CYP has been missing, they should consider the preservation of forensic opportunities. These include:

- Bodily fluids, such as blood, saliva, semen on clothing and the individual
- Presence of injuries that could require photographing
- Electronic data such as mobile phones, tablets, computers
- Presence of intoxicants in their system, such as drugs or alcohol

Upon the return of a missing CYP, the immediate priority is to ensure their wellbeing and to provide any medical assistance that is required.

A quality safe and well check will be conducted by the police as soon as possible after the CYP has been found. The purpose of the check is to establish whether the CYP has suffered any harm, confirm where they have been and who with and also provide the CYP with an opportunity to disclose any offences committed by them or against them.

Careful consideration is necessary to ensure that the missing CYP is spoken to at the right time, in the right circumstances, and is provided with the appropriate level of support.

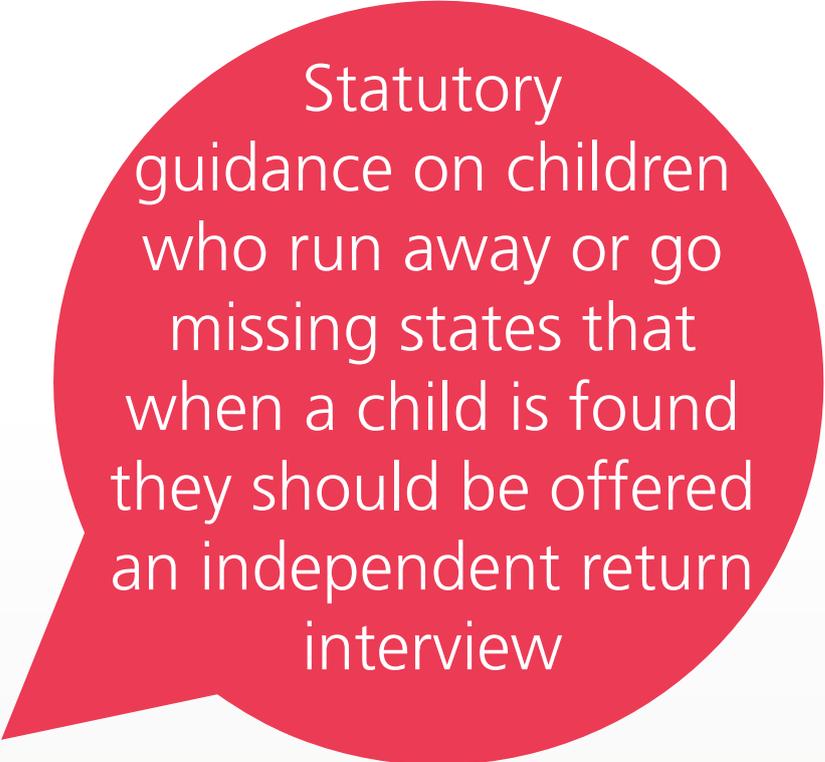
The following list of questions is provided as a guide to officers when they are completing a safe and well check. This is not an exhaustive list and is designed to obtain as much information as possible to prevent future missing reports and to provide safeguarding where necessary.

Reasons for going missing	Circumstances while away
<p>Why did they leave?</p> <p>Life pressures - school, family, friends, financial, relationship?</p> <p>To clear their head?</p> <p>To get family contact?</p> <p>Were they encouraged to stay out and by whom?</p> <p>Were they under the influence of drugs or alcohol when they left?</p> <p>Did they go anywhere that was unfamiliar to them and why?</p>	<p>How did they travel, how far did they go?</p> <p>Who were they with?</p> <p>What did they do?</p> <p>Where did they stay, shower and change clothes?</p> <p>Did they have any money, access to phones or social media?</p> <p>Did they contact anyone while they were away? Why this person?</p> <p>Were they a witness, victim or perpetrator of any crime?</p> <p>Were they under the influence of drugs or alcohol?</p> <p>Were they hurt, abused, injured or drugged?</p>
Reasons for returning	Vulnerability issues
<p>Why did they return?</p> <p>Would anything have made them return sooner?</p> <p>Who traced them - police, family, friends, carers?</p> <p>If they had not been traced, would they have returned of their own accord and when?</p> <p>Is there any help they would like but were unable to find?</p>	<p>When they were away, did they feel vulnerable or in any danger?</p> <p>Have they got any injuries and if so, what are they?</p> <p>Did they try to get any help whilst away?</p> <p>Did they consider or try to take their own life?</p> <p>Did they talk to anyone prior to leaving about their concerns?</p>

Return home interviews

Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing states that when a child is found they should be offered an independent return interview (DfE, 2014:14).

The completion of return home interviews is currently a shared process between the Placement Team (SCC Families First) and Brighter Futures (independent agency). Brighter Futures conduct all return home interviews for children aged 11 and above in Stoke-on-Trent, Moorlands, Newcastle and Stafford. The Placement Team conduct return home interviews for children up to the age of 17 in Cannock, South Staffordshire, East Staffordshire, Lichfield and Tamworth.

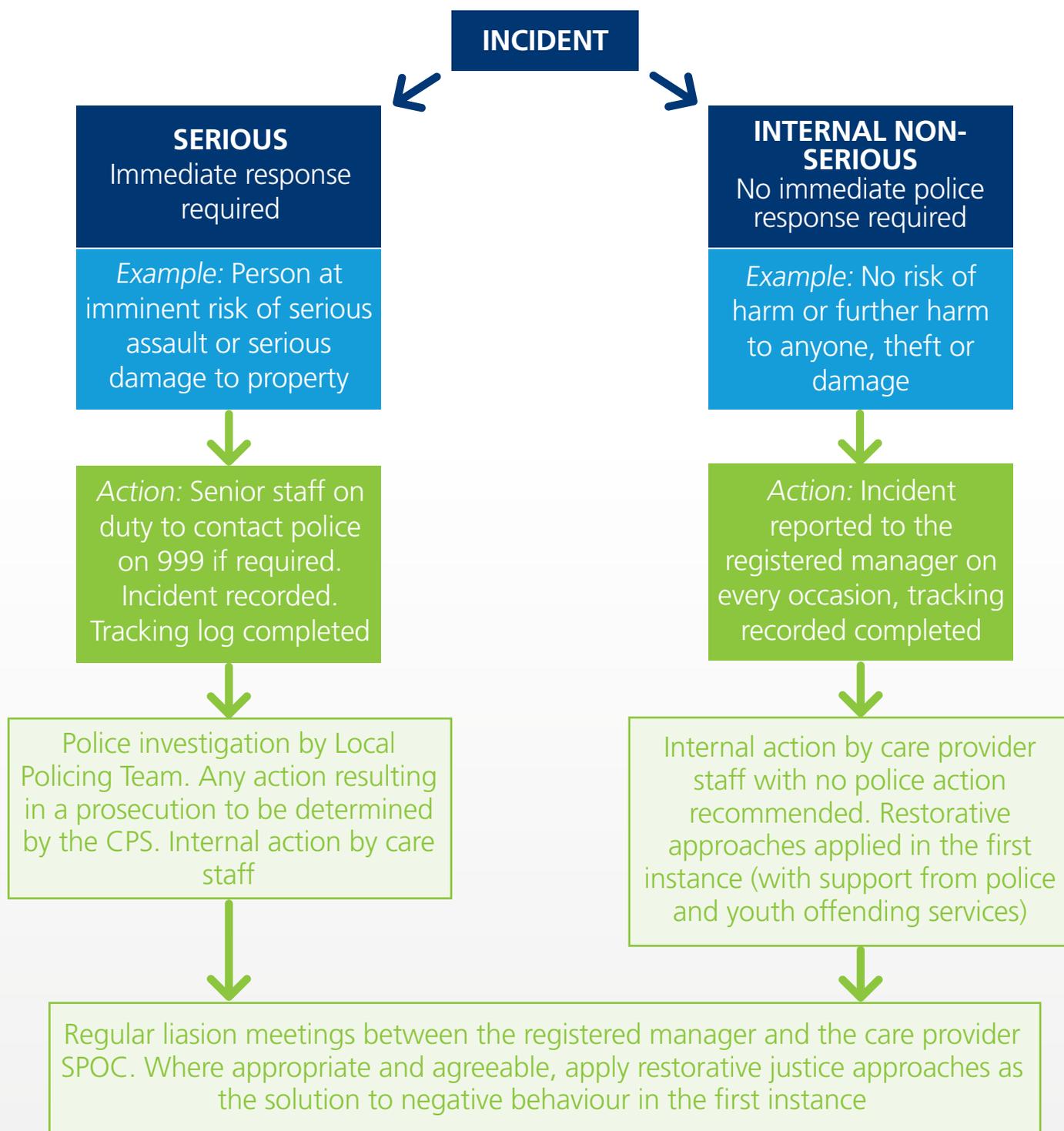


Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing states that when a child is found they should be offered an independent return interview

Joint protocol to reduce prosecution of CYP

Care homes/supported accommodation - categories of response

This policy must be followed when any member of staff is considering contacting the police.



Restorative justice

Restorative justice (RJ) is a process that brings together those harmed by a crime or conflict and those responsible for that harm. This enables everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward.

All Staffordshire Police officers and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Youth Offending Service (YOS) staff are trained in RJ and can provide further information about the process, suitability criteria and how it works. All officers and YOS staff are able to carry out the instant RJ process.

In the criminal justice system, restorative processes give victims the chance to explain to offenders how the crime has impacted upon their lives, to get answers to their questions and to receive an apology.

It holds offenders to account for what they have done and it helps them to understand and take responsibility for the real impact of their actions.

The four basic elements of RJ are:

Suitability

The matter must be suitable for a RJ solution.

Consent

All parties must agree to a RJ approach.

Admission

Offenders must accept responsibility for the harm done.

Reparation

Some form of reparation must take place or be agreed.



Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)

10-point checklist

This checklist must be completed by the police and sent to the CPS when they make a charging decision.

10-point checklist for offences in care homes/supported accommodation

1.	Disciplinary policy of care provider?	
2.	Why have the police been involved and is it as agreed in the policy?	
3.	Any informal/disciplinary action already taken?	
3.	Any apology/reparation?	
5.	Victim's views?	
6.	Social worker's views?	
7.	Care plan for looked-after CYP?	
8.	Recent behaviour/incidents regarding looked-after CYP?	
9.	Information about incident from looked-after CYP (interview or other)?	
10.	Aggravating or mitigating features?	

Police single point of contact (SPOC) and manager's contract

Every care home/supported accommodation within Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent has got a police officer or police community support officer (PCSO) assigned to them from Staffordshire Police as their SPOC.

SPOCs have been selected due to their enthusiasm for working with partners and drive to safeguard CYP.

The role of a SPOC is to provide a regular point of contact to address minor issues and offer advice where needed. SPOCs provide support to their Staffordshire Police colleagues, as well as to partners, ensuring that the decisions made are in the best interests of the child. They will work with care homes/supported accommodation to prevent incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour around premises.

All police SPOCs have been provided with the contract which sets out the role and the expectations of Staffordshire Police.





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Police SPOC and manager's contract

SPOC ROLE AND EXPECTATIONS:

- Keep knowledge up-to-date around looked-after CYP and know where the care providers are on your local policing team (LPT)
- Prevent crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) around your care providers
- Help understanding of safeguarding issues and be a champion for your LPT
- Help improve decision making by care providers
- Support colleagues and partners in making the right decisions putting the CYP first
- Understand risks and support pathways
- Visit your care providers at least once per set of shifts or agree a form of regular contact
- Build relationships with managers and care staff
- Be respectful of care providers' policies/procedures and sensitive to others limitations
- Improve communication and share information
- Share best practice and good ideas
- Be professional and positive in changing views on policing
- Influence missing investigations and use compact to full potential
- Be a point of contact to address minor issues and offer advice
- Do not deal with every incident or pick up all crimes
- Attend strategy/professionals meetings as required
- Own vulnerability profiles
- Update profiles on Guardian
- Link in with Integrated Offender Management.

MANAGER'S EXPECTATIONS:

- Work with your SPOC to prevent crime and ASB around your premises
- Help understanding of safeguarding issues and offer advice and support
- Support colleagues and partners in making the right decisions putting the CYP first
- Build relationships with police and support interactions with CYP
- Be open, honest and sensitive to others limitations
- Improve communication and share information
- Share best practice and good ideas
- Ensure all staff are aware of the 10-point plan
- Provide advice around your policies and current legislation.

SPOC

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____

MANAGER

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____



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Manager visit/contact form

Name of care provider:		Date:	
Caller:		Date of incident:	
Type of incident:			
Incident details:			
Child / children involved:		Officer dealing/ Attending:	
Police response:			
Follow up:		Signposted to:	



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SPOC monthly visit/contact form

Name of care provider:		Date:	
Caller:			
Details of current residents:			
Details of any incidents involving reports to police since last visit:			
Incident details and those involved:			
Details of any trigger plans in place:		Are all trigger plans up-to-date?	



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Child and young person (CYP) information

Name:		Status:	
Insert recent photograph			
Address:		Date of arrival:	
Date of birth:		Mobile number:	
Education/ work details and contracts:			
Description:			
Ethnic origin		Warning signs:	
Religion		Smokes cigarettes	
Complexion		Drinks alcohol	
Birth place/ nationality?		Uses drugs? Which drugs?	
Height		Allergies	
Build		Medical alerts	
Eye colour		Medication	

Wears glasses		Habits	
Marks/scars/ tattoos		Disabilities	
Social worker's details			
Name		Address	
Telephone number		Email	
Local authority details			
Name		Address	
Telephone number		Email	
Doctor's details			
Name		Address	
Telephone number		Email	
Psychiatrist's details			
Name		Address	
Telephone number		Email	
Contacts - family			
Name			
Address			
Telephone number			
Email			
Name			
Address			
Telephone number			
Email			
Relevant background and additional information			

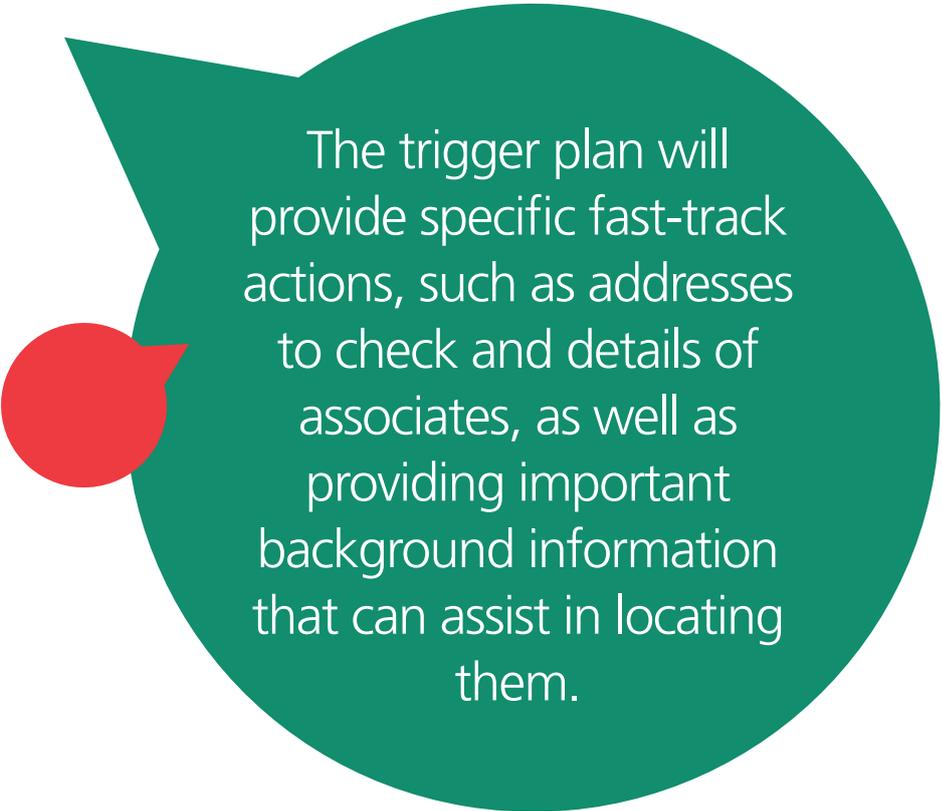
Trigger plans

Where it is anticipated that a CYP is likely to go missing on a regular basis or they have been identified as being at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) or membership of a gang, Staffordshire Police will write a trigger plan.

The trigger plan will provide specific fast-track actions, such as addresses to be checked and details of associates, as well as providing important background information that can assist in locating them. The trigger plan also assists in classifying the risk status of the missing CYP.

Whenever a CYP is placed in local authority care in the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent area, a trigger plan should be completed by the placing (responsible) local authority when the identified risk level dictates.

Over the following pages are examples of a completed trigger plan.



The trigger plan will provide specific fast-track actions, such as addresses to check and details of associates, as well as providing important background information that can assist in locating them.

Investigation and Missing Person CSE/Gang Trigger Plan

Insert up-to-date photograph

Full name

Date of birth

At risk of?

KIV: There have been recent episodes of superficial self-harm.

HOME ADDRESS

1 High Street
A Town
Staffordshire
ST17 0YY

Current address

DO NOT DIVULGE

On Tuesday 10th April 2016 at about 10.00hrs A Person has been moved to the following location:

2 Main Street
Any Town
Stoke on Trent
ST15 0AA

No contact details known to date. To follow in due course.

This placement has been arranged via social services, and has been arranged for them to remain at this location for 12 months, or until she is deemed fit to return to her previous address.

Staffordshire social services currently have full PR for A Person and the case worker currently is

Any contact from the secure centre will be through Staffordshire social services, who will directly update Staffordshire Police with any disclosures which require a police investigation.

A Person's family will continue to reside at:

1 High Street
A Town
Staffordshire
ST17 0YY.

(DO NOT DIVULGE)

Vehicles with Legitimate access to the above location.

Vehicle Make, Model, Colour and Registration Number

--

	Input details of any concerns that you have regarding A Person's relationships with others, drug or alcohol use (including suspected use), episodes of self-harm. And any other information that would give you concerns around the individual and any risks posed to them.
Social worker	Insert details
Parents contact details	Insert details
Last known mobile number for A Person	Insert details of all known associates and family member contact numbers.
Known associates	Insert details of known associates.
Relevant addresses	Insert details of all relevant addresses.
Areas frequented / places where missing individual is likely to be taken to by potential offenders	Insert details of places or areas that they are likely to be taken to or go to.

Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation Team

The Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation Team has the ability to work remotely from local police stations, partnership locations and community buildings, as well as family homes.

The delivery of the team covers Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and is made up of a project lead, a sergeant, three police constables and five multi-agency roles.

The team have experiences of working in different areas including education/schools, education welfare, teenage pregnancy, males at risk, policing, family intervention and working with communities.

Aims of the team:

- To identify CYP who are at risk of potential sexual exploitation
- To engage with potential and actual victims
- To identify those at risk of offending
- To work with other agencies to share information to help safeguard CYP
- To raise awareness for police, professionals, parents and CYP
- To identify and work with seldom-heard groups
- Link with both national and local issues to ensure that information is accurate.

Care providers

The team links with vulnerability officers within Local Policing Teams (LPTs) and the Care Managers' Forum, in respect of intervention within residential care providers. LPTs work alongside care providers to ensure that CSE awareness/training is available to both residents and staff. The team are able to offer a more targeted approach where necessary.

Engagement

Once information has been collated and it is agreed that the team will offer support, based on need and risk assessment, they will work with the CYP to identify the most appropriate service(s) and make relevant referrals.

CSE Social Worker/Families First CSE Coordinator

The CSE Social Worker/Families First CSE Coordinator is able to advise on CSE issues and liaise directly with police, children's social care and other agencies and local authorities.

Useful information

Useful contact numbers

Please dial 101 and ask for the relevant extension number below:

	Extension
Public Protection Coordinators	2876/2667

Gangs Hub	3281
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Partnership Hubs (based in Local Policing Teams):

Cannock	4216/4247
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East Staffs	4721
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Lichfield	5614
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Moorlands	2943/3825/3869
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Newcastle	3571
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South Staffs	8284/8271
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Stafford	4006
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Stoke	3316
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Tamworth	2973/2977/2978
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Useful links

Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care	www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care__3_.pdf
Children's Homes Regulations (2011)	www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/583/made
The Crime and Disorder Act 1998	www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/37/contents
Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012	www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/10/contents/enacted
Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards (2011) - Standard 26	www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/NMS%20Fostering%20Services.pdf
Guide to Children's Homes Regulations, including quality standards	www.gov.uk/government/publications/childrens-homes-regulations-including-quality-standards-guide
National Minimum Standards: Fostering Services	www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/Adoptionandfostering/Page1/DFE-00029-2011
Joint protocol on children who run away or go missing from home or care	details to follow
A joint protocol to reduce prosecution of looked-after children	details to follow



City of
Stoke-on-Trent



Staffordshire
County Council

