

CF Policies Missing Children policy

Date 20.08.19

Title: Missing Children

Purpose: To establish a plan to prevent young people from going missing, and to outline staff's responsibilities and appropriate courses of action in a situation where a young person is missing. Due to the nature of our service and the complex and varied needs of our young people, the importance of this policy and staff's understanding of it is paramount.

- 1) Each young person who accesses the service to have a relevant, detailed and up to date care plan. This care plan will:
 - i. Assess the likelihood of the young person going missing.
 - ii. Assess the danger of a young person going missing.
 - iii. Assess a young person's understanding of said danger.
 - iv. Identify measures to prevent a young person going missing and highlight how much support and supervision they require when going out into the community.

- 2) Should a child be missing from the care home, staff should:
 - i. Scan the building checking most likely places the young person should be.
 - ii. If the young person is not found, and is believed to have absconded, the police need to be contacted immediately. The vulnerability of the young person will need to be emphasised to the police.
 - iii. The police should be sent a photograph of the young person who is missing. These should be kept within the C Fields shared drive.
 - iv. The duty/on call manager should be alerted immediately.
 - v. On the condition that the rest of the group within the home are safely cared for, at least one staff member should leave the building and check the surrounding area.
 - vi. The young person's family will need to be contacted. This phone call should be made once the Police have been alerted to the severity of the situation.

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3) If a young person goes missing whilst out in the community, staff should:

- i. Scan the surrounding area.
- ii. Check with other staff members to establish whether the young person is with them.
- iii. If staff believe the young person to be missing, the police will need to be contacted immediately.
- iv. *The police should be sent a photograph of the young person who is missing. These should be kept within the C Fields shared drive.*
- v. *Staff will need to contact C Fields as a matter of urgency and request that this photograph be sent to the Police.*
- vi. *Staff will need to ensure the safety of the other young people in their care.*
- vii. *The young person's family must be contacted. This phone call should be made once the Police have been alerted of the severity of the situation.*

4) Following an event when a young person has gone missing, the home must ensure the following is completed:

- i. *Significant Event*
- ii. *Notifiable Event(If the young person is missing over 30 minutes)**
- iii. *Formal apology given to young person's parents or carers.*
- iv. *A discussion to be held with the keyworker and the family and necessary changes made to Residential Action Plan and Risk Assessments highlighting risks.*
- v. *If it is deemed that the young person will continue to attempt to abscond then a review meeting needs to be held with Social Worker, Keyworker and a member of the management team.*
- vi. *All staff within team to be communicated of this event and plans of action taken as a result.*
- vii. *A missing interview is carried out by an independent qualified worker. (If this is deemed appropriate or worthwhile**. Our named worker is Ricky Sangster, Unit Manager at Woodview).*

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** This is over and above what is required by Ofsted's standards and regulations. Normal circumstances state that Ofsted should be notified in the event that a young person is missing over 24 hours. However, given the vulnerability of our young people we feel that half an hour is significant enough to notify our regulator. This is incorporated into our policy as a safeguarding measure.*

*** This would be deemed worthwhile if we believe that having the opportunity to discuss this with an independent person could help advocate for the young person or help us understand the reason for going missing. Due to the abilities and needs of some of our young people this may not always be the most appropriate course of action.*

5) In order to ensure that staff act appropriately in the event of a missing person, the home will:

- i. Alert all staff members to this policy.*
- ii. Discuss in supervision at least once per year as to the correct protocols in the event of a missing person.*
- iii. Incorporate this policy into the induction of all new staff members.*

6) In order to prevent young people from going missing from care, the home will:

- i. Highlight the concept of "Safe People" and "Safe Places" for our service users to approach when in the community through a visual display.*
- ii. Hold children's meetings with young people around "safe people"*
- iii. Review young people's care plans and risk assessments on a six monthly basis.*
- iv. Invite local Police officers in to the residential unit to talk to young people about what to do if they feel they are in danger.*