

Missing Children Multi-Agency Audit Feedback



The Local Safeguarding
Children Board

Working to Keep West Cheshire's
Children and Young People Safe

What We Did

The theme of the Quarter 3 2016/17 Multi-Agency Audit was **Missing Children**. This theme was chosen due to:-

- Findings identified from Serious Case Review 15/01 (Child B)
- Revision of the Pan Cheshire Missing from Home Protocol 2016 – 2017
- Looking for assurance that the needs of Children in Care who are placed outside Cheshire, who go missing are being met.

What We Found

147 Audit Tools
Returned

Audit returns and attendance at the
day was excellent 😊

59 Practitioners
attended the Audit
Day

- 😊 **Multi-Agency Working** - In the cases deemed good there was evidence of effective multi-agency working with good communication between agencies and families.
- 😊 **Child's Voice** - There was strong evidence in the cases deemed good and some that required improvement that the child's voice was being sought and subsequently acted upon/informing the plan. The cases where the child's voice was heard showed a reduction in missing incidents and attendance at A&E.
- ☹️ **Engaging With Children** – In a quarter of cases, the child would not engage with multi-agencies practitioners and this theme was evident in Serious Case Review 15/01 (Child B). This highlights that when we have a stuck case we become process driven rather than be creative in continuing to engage the child.
- ☹️ **Information Sharing** – GPs, School Nurses and Catch 22 were not consistently updated on key events for cases they are involved with. These agencies all offer information or services that could improve the outcomes to the child/young person.
- ☹️ **Learning & Development** - there was evidence that the Missing Protocol for children placed outside the county was not followed and the communication flow when a child goes missing was not being adhered to.

Key Messages for Managers

- **Children's Social Care** - Ensure that your staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to return interviews for Children in Care placed outside our county.
- **Police** - Ensure that your staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to notifying the Local Authority when a child is reported missing and the sharing of Safe and Well checks.

Key Messages for Practitioners

- **Stick with the Child** – Invest time to understand the underlying reasons that leads the child to go missing. The missing incident maybe one of a magnitude of behaviours that stems from this underlying issue or issues. Without this full knowledge beware of unintended negative consequences from your decision making.
- **Please see** - The recently published Voice of the Child toolkit as this may assist practitioners to find alternative and creative means of engaging resistant young people. [Voice of the Child Toolkit](#)

Key Messages for Multi-agency Practice

- **Remember** - if you are not satisfied with the outcome or a decision made it is in everyone's interest to challenge partner's to ensure the best outcomes for the child. [Pan Cheshire Escalation Policy](#)
- **Ensure** - that all relevant information is shared with all partners working with the child and family to ensure that the best outcomes for the child can be secured.

If you only do one thing, take the time to ...

Understand your role and responsibilities toward safeguarding a child who has gone missing [Pan Cheshire Missing from Home Protocol 2016 - 2017](#) and pay particular attention to:-

- Who you need to notify if a child goes missing
- What you have to do and who you have to notify when the child is located
- Why is the child going missing? It will be difficult to safeguard and stop further incidents if you don't have this understanding
- Act upon the information provided by the child