

Changes to how we deliver services: Return Home Interviews for Children Missing from Home or Care January 2018

Surrey County Council is committed to giving the best possible support to children go missing from home or care to keep them safe from harm. From January 2018, we have transferred the return home interview service from the current provider, Missing People UK, to a dedicated team within the Surrey Family Services. To do this well we will make sure there is minimal service disruption by working closely with all our colleagues across the MASH, Children's services and Surrey Police.

Why is it important?

There has been an average of 303 missing episodes per month (average 186 children)

For children who repeatedly go missing there is often a link to other forms of exploitation – drug running, gang violence, a victim or perpetrator of crime, trafficking and Child sexual exploitation.

It is important for us to understand the child's experience when missing, including the detail as to where the child was, how they got there and how they got home

So responding to every missing episode is important, and speaking to the child about their experience is vital.

Who does what?

This will mean that from January 1st Return Home Interviews (RHI) will be provided through the following

- There is no change for Children who are Looked After – the RHI is conducted by the team they are allocated to
- If the child is open to Surrey Family Service the RHI is conducted by team they are allocated to
- If the child is not open to either Surrey Children's Services or Family Services the RHI will be conducted by the Rapid Engagement Team (RET) in SFS
- If the child is open to Children's Services – either in the Assessment, Child Protection and Proceedings or Child in Need Teams then the RET team will contact allocated worker to discuss if RET team undertakes it or the allocated worker

The importance of the Safety plan

This has given us an opportunity to review procedures and paperwork with all partners to ensure young people and families are seen quickly and that risk is managed. Performance in November and December has seen an improvement in both performance and integrated working.

It remains vital that the allocated worker responds quickly to every missing episode, that the child is spoken to and a multi - agency safety plan is put in place to prevent further episodes.

Key contact

For those not looked after it will be

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