

Missing from care record

Your missing from care protocol comes first. This is where you record that you followed it.

The decision between 'missing' and 'away without authorisation' is based on risk, not on how long somebody has been gone — follow your home's protocol and your local arrangements with the police. Do not pursue a child. The return interview is independent for a reason: a young person is more likely to say something true to somebody who is not the adult they were running from.

YOUNG PERSON	DATE LAST SEEN	TIME LAST SEEN
RECORDED BY	REFERENCE	EPISODE NUMBER

BEFORE YOU FILL THIS IN

If you believe the child is in immediate danger, call 999 now.

Follow your home's missing from care procedure and your local police protocol — they take precedence over this form.

Do not pursue or follow a child who has left.

Make the decision between 'missing' and 'away without authorisation' on risk, with your manager, and record who decided.

Keep looking and keep ringing while the report is being made.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES

Last seen by — where — doing what	
What was said before they left	
What they were wearing	
What they took with them — phone, money, bag, medication	
Phone number and whether it is ringing	
Anything that happened beforehand that may be relevant	
Have they gone before? Where to, and with whom	

DECISION

Missing — whereabouts unknown, or there is a risk of harm	THIS ONE
Away from placement without authorisation — whereabouts known and no immediate risk	

WHO DECIDED, AND ON WHAT BASIS

Decided by — name and role	
Time of decision	
Risk factors considered	
Reviewed and changed later? When, and why	

WHAT WE DID

With times.	
Places checked	
People contacted — friends, family, school	
Phone calls and messages sent	

Police reported to — time — reference — officer

Searched the home and grounds

Anything else

WHO WE TOLD

Police — time — reference

Registered manager — time

Social worker or emergency duty team — time

Parents or those with parental responsibility — time

Local authority missing coordinator — time

Anybody else

THE RETURN

Returned on — date and time

How — brought back, came back, found

Who saw them first

How they were — physically and in themselves

Did they need medical attention?

What they said when they came back — their words

Were they offered food, a drink, a bath, sleep before anything else?

RETURN INTERVIEW

Independent of the home. The home's job is to make sure it was offered and to record what happened.

Offered on — by whom

Accepted or declined

Carried out by — organisation

Date carried out

Information shared back with the home

If declined, what was offered instead

PATTERN AND RISK – WHAT THIS EPISODE TELLS US

Same place, same people, same day of the week. This is where exploitation becomes visible.

WHAT CHANGED AS A RESULT

Placement plan updated? By whom, when

Risk assessment updated?

Safeguarding concern raised? Separate record

Raised with the social worker or at a strategy meeting?

Anything for the next review

SIGN-OFF

Special category data about a child. Hold securely.

RECORDED BY	DATE
REGISTERED MANAGER	DATE