**Safeguarding
Swindon's Children**

**Wiltshire Safeguarding
Children Board**

Swindon and Wiltshire Children Missing from Home and Care

September 2017

Contents

1. Purpose and scope of protocol

When children go missing from home or care, this is a clear signal that something is wrong in their lives. Going missing has serious implications for a child's welfare as it puts them at risk of harm in the short term and will affect longer term outcomes. Research also indicates that children who go missing are more vulnerable to sexual exploitation, substance misuse and involvement in crime.

Swindon Borough Council, Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire Police and Wiltshire and Swindon Safeguarding Children Boards have produced this protocol to ensure that all agencies work together to:

- prevent children from going missing
- take action to safeguard the welfare of children who have gone missing
- monitor and review patterns of going missing

The protocol covers all children and young people under 18 years old who go missing from home or care, including children who are forced out of the family home and children missing from education.

2. Assessing and categorising risk

2.1. Missing

Missing Persons definition, outlined in Authorised Professional Practice 2017;

"Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located and their well-being or otherwise confirmed"

All reports of missing sit within a continuum of risk from 'no apparent risk' through to high-risk cases that require immediate intensive action.

All children missing under these circumstances must be reported to the police immediately.

Level of risk	Definition
High	The risk of serious harm to the subject or the public is assessed as very likely.
Medium	The risk of harm to the subject or the public is assessed as likely but not serious
Low	The risk of harm to the subject or the public is assessed as possible but minimal
No Apparent Risk	There is no apparent risk of harm to either the subject or the public

https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/missing-persons/

2.2. Unauthorised absences

Some children may absent themselves from home or placement without permission but their whereabouts are known by parents and carers, or they are known to be safe or this is a pattern of repeated behaviour where the young person returns home after a few hours.

An example of this may be a teenager who stays out beyond a curfew but whose whereabouts remains known to their parent or carer and/or whom remain in touch during their absence.

These children are not classed as missing, and generally, should not be reported to the police unless there are risk factors present that may make the child vulnerable whilst absent.

2.3. Absconded

If a child or young person is on bail or the subject of a criminal court order requiring them to remain at a particular address and they are missing from that address, this will be a criminal matter and **the child must be reported as missing to the police immediately.**

2.4. Abducted

If a child is unlawfully removed from the care of anyone who is legally looking after them, whether it is a parent or foster carer, **the child must be reported as missing to the police immediately via 999.** This includes any child who is removed from placement by parents or others contrary to the care plan where the child is subject of an Interim Care Order or Care Order.

Where the child is subject to a Care Order, Emergency Protection Order or in police protection, social workers may consider seeking legal advice on obtaining a Recovery Order.

For guidance on children who have been abducted and may leave the UK, please see section 11.

3. Multi-agency working

To ensure a high quality of integrated working and joint responses when children go missing, all agencies will:

- share information in a timely and lawful manner
- base decisions and actions on missing children risk assessments
- make appropriate referrals to agencies for services for children, including child protection referrals where the child is at risk of significant harm
- work jointly to share information and intelligence that enables the development of services for missing children in Swindon and Wiltshire
- appoint a designated officer with lead responsibility for missing children and for the implementation of this protocol
- ensure staff have the right training and support to carry out their role under this protocol

4. Information sharing and data analysis

In order to implement this protocol fully and ensure that children who go missing are kept safe, it is important that all agencies share information about missing incidents and the circumstances surrounding them.

Swindon and Wiltshire Children Services Departments collects and collates the following information about children who go missing from home, care or education including children from other areas who have been placed within Swindon and Wiltshire boundary areas:

- name of child
- dates of episodes and duration
- services currently working with the child
- whether the child was missing from home, care or education
- whether there are concerns regarding sexual exploitation
- whether a missing risk assessment has been completed
- whether a missing child notification has been completed
- whether a timely return home interview has been carried out

A quarterly report analysing the missing children data is presented to both Swindon and Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Boards so they are able to scrutinise the quality of the multi-agency response to missing children and ensure that these children are receiving the help they need to safeguard and promote their welfare.

4.1. Information sharing with other local authorities

- Where it is known that a Swindon or Wiltshire child has gone missing to another local authority area, Wiltshire Police will contact the Police force in that area and the relevant LA will be notified by Children's Social Care (CSC).
  http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/swindon/p_ch_fam_moving_across_la.html

- Where families go missing, CSC in the relevant Swindon or Wiltshire Authority will send out notifications to all other local authorities giving details of the family

- If a child from another area is found in Swindon or Wiltshire, CSC in Swindon or Wiltshire as relevant will notify the home local authority

- Wiltshire Police will also share any intelligence regarding CSE with the relevant neighbouring Local Authorities

5. Agency roles and responsibilities

5.1. Swindon and Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Boards

The WSCB and SSCB will:

- co-ordinate the development and implementation of a multi-agency strategy on missing children

- provide the policy framework and training to support the implementation of the missing protocol
- collate and analyse data on children going missing in order to improve responses and service provision
- scrutinise the multi-agency response to children who run away or go missing
- provide challenge and hold to account agencies in relation to their response to and support of children who go missing

The Child Exploitation and Missing sub-groups of the two Boards will be the main forum for development, monitoring and review of the strategy and all agencies will be expected to contribute information as part of the data analysis. Regular quarterly reporting to the Board by the CE and Missing sub group will ensure that all partner agencies are carrying out their role under this protocol and that the protocol is achieving the aim of keeping children who run away safe.

5.2. Wiltshire Police

The police will:

- collect and collate missing persons reports
- carry out investigations of missing children
- carry out a risk assessment on all children who go missing and keep the case under constant review
- notify other agencies of missing children reports
- use police powers under the Children Act 1989 as required to safeguard missing children who are located
- carry out Prevention Interviews as soon as possible when the child returns

Where there are child protection concerns, the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will be informed and police will be involved in strategy discussions and enquiries as appropriate.

5.3. Children's Social Care

Children's social care has a statutory duty under the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote children's welfare, including children at risk because of ongoing missing incidents.

Children's social care will:

- carry out an assessment of children's needs where going missing behaviour is a presenting issue
- provide an early help or statutory social work service for children who go missing based on their assessed needs
- receive all missing children notifications from the police and other agencies
- where a child is already known to CSC, ensure preventative planning and appropriate responses to missing incidents are included in the child's plan
- carry out return interviews independent of their care provider for children known to CSC where this is the child's preference or where the child is over 10 years old and is not already known to CSC

- keep a record of all children who are reported as missing

5.4. Foster carers, residential workers and housing support workers

Where the child is looked after by Swindon or Wiltshire, a care leaver (under 18) or living in Swindon/Wiltshire young person's supporting housing (under 18), their foster carer, residential worker or housing support worker must:

- contribute to any plans designed to reduce the risk of going missing within the care or pathway planning forum
- respond to missing incidents in line with this protocol
- notify the Police (where missing), Swindon/Wiltshire children's social care or EDS and parents where appropriate
- carry out joint risk assessments with social workers of children missing from placements
- work with the police and CSC to ensure the child's safe return to placement
- provide accurate and timely records of incidents to inform data gathering on individual and group patterns of running away

See Fostering Services - National Minimum Standards 2011 Standard 5

Residential units should have in place procedures to both prevent looked after children going missing and to locate, return and support looked after children who have gone missing.
See Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the Quality Standards 2015- The Protection of Children Standard

5.5. Emergency Duty Service

Swindon and Wiltshire's Emergency Services provide a social work service to cover emergency situations arising out of office hours and will:

- respond to notifications from foster carers, residential workers and housing support workers on behalf of CSC where a looked after child is reported as missing
- provide a response for any missing child who is located by either ensuring their safe return home or to their placement or where necessary arranging for emergency overnight accommodation
- pass on all relevant information to CSC or other services for further action

5.6. Schools and colleges

Schools and colleges will:

- deliver an educational programme aimed at discouraging children from going missing
- where appropriate, refer children on to preventative programmes
- notify Swindon or Wiltshire of children who are missing from the school roll under the "Missing from Education" policy.
- make referrals for children whom it is thought are at risk of going missing
- notify Swindon / Wiltshire of any child who is removed from the school roll to be educated at home
- help children returning from a missing episode to settle back into education

6. Preventing missing episodes

It is important that children who may be considering going missing are able to speak to someone about their situation and get support to help them deal with issues that may cause them to do so. Professionals who are concerned that a child they work with is at significant risk of harm because of going missing should follow their agency child protection procedures and refer the child to MASH without delay.
See http://www.swindonlscb.org.uk/procedures/Pages/Home.aspx

Where Children's Social Care is already working with a child who is at risk of going missing, social workers and the professional network will have an opportunity to work with the child to reduce the risk and plan for any incidents.

Risk will be discussed in planning meetings such as CIN or LAC reviews and child protection conferences/core groups in order to plan what actions to take and support to provide to the child to reduce the risk of them going missing and what actions will be taken in the event that they do go missing.

7. Children missing from home

7.1. Carrying out a risk assessment

Where a child goes missing from home, the police will carry out the risk assessment at the time of the report being made.

7.2. Reporting a missing child to police

When a child goes missing from home, there is an expectation that their parents/carers will report this to the police, and any failure to do so will be considered a safeguarding issue.

If a professional becomes aware that a parent/carer has not reported a child as missing, they should refer the child to Police immediately, particularly if there were concerns about the child's welfare prior to them going missing or if they have a history of going missing.

If a social worker who is working with a Child in Need becomes aware that a child has not been reported as missing, they should discuss the matter with their manager. Parents should be encouraged to file a missing report or alternatively, it may be decided that CSC will report the child as missing.

7.3. Referring children and families for services

All missing children who are not already known to CSC should be referred by the police to Swindon Family Contact Point/MASH or Wiltshire's MASH as relevant who will make a decision within 24 hours on what action to take and what services are most suitable to support the child on their return.

Generally, CSC will refer children and families onto the most appropriate service to undertake an assessment once the child returns.

However, if there are concerns about the child's welfare or the child has a history of going missing, the CSC manager may refer the child on to the relevant CSC team for further assessment. The assessment will then consider the most appropriate support for parents while the child is away and carry out a child and family assessment once the child returns.

7.4. Child protection concerns

CSC will consider convening a Section 47 Strategy Discussion meeting within 24 hours of the below criteria being met.

- 3 times in 90 days
- over 24 hours
- there are concerns that the child is or may suffer significant harm whilst away or on their return
- the missing child is already subject to a child protection plan or section 47 investigation
- the child is known to CSC and has gone missing in suspicious circumstances
- a pregnant women goes missing and there are concerns for the welfare of the unborn child. See Swindon Unborn Baby Protocol
- a family goes missing and there are concerns about the welfare of a child because of the presence in the household of a person who poses a risk to children or is already known or suspected to have harmed the child

8. Children missing from care

8.1. Response to unauthorised absence

A child will be absent without authorisation if the carer or worker in the supported accommodation or residential establishment/home knows where the child is or that there is no immediate risk to the child's welfare and they would normally return at some point. In these cases the child should not be reported as missing to the police, but the carer or worker should make all attempts to contact the child and persuade them to return to the placement.

All unauthorised absences must be notified to the child's allocated social worker at the earliest opportunity but there is no need to notify the EDS. Although no action should be taken on unauthorised absences, they do need to be monitored; social workers and carers/key workers and update the risk assessment on a regular basis or when new information becomes known.

8.2. Response where the child is missing

If a child goes missing from the placement, the foster carer or worker should make all reasonable efforts to locate them in the first instance but this must not delay any action to report the matter. This should include searching the local area, contacting friends and birth family members and trying to contact the child directly.

If the child cannot be located within a reasonable timescale for the child's age, and taking into account vulnerabilities they should be reported as missing to the police immediately. The child's allocated social worker (or EDS/EDT out of hours) should be

notified. Residential homes should also notify their registration authority as appropriate.

8.3. Recording missing and unauthorised absence incidents

Foster carers and workers must keep accurate records of:

- the date and time of the child going missing or absenting themselves
- any relevant circumstances or incidents
- action taken to locate or contact the child
- whether the police were informed and if not, reasons for this
- details of any conversations and agreed actions taken with social workers and police

8.4. Children placed outside of Swindon/Wiltshire

Children who are placed at a distance from their home borough are more likely to be at risk of sexual exploitation, substance misuse and involvement in criminal activity than looked after children who are placed closer to home. It is important that their vulnerability is recognised when planning for placements and that social workers remain vigilant to the increased risks during placement. Notification of placement form is to be shared with Wiltshire police, health and education.

CSC staff involved in commissioning and choosing placements for looked after children who are being placed out of the area must contact receiving local authorities to get information about the local area and whether there will be any increased risks to the child, especially where the child has a history of going missing.

Although carers and workers in the host authority will follow their own local procedures **this protocol applies to all children who are looked after by Swindon/Wiltshire regardless of where they are placed.** A copy of the protocol must be provided to all out of area placement providers and social workers should stress the importance of carers and residential workers notifying the allocated social worker of all unauthorised absences and missing episodes. For Wiltshire looked after children, the Missing Children Co-coordinator must also be notified.

9. Child missing from hospital

Hospital staff will usually only report a person missing where they identify a risk to the patient or others. Generally children will come in to this category and so police will be informed of a child that has gone missing from inpatient care and specifically where there has been no plan for discharge. In relation to children who go missing from an Emergency Department it will depend on whether there is a specific risk to the child and whether they need further assessment or treatment. As such, it is important to investigate, risk assess and record these in line with this procedure

9.1 Child missing from Child Mental Health Settings
Staff in Child Mental Health settings should follow this LSCB protocol.

10. Child missing from School (Truant)

Truanting is not normally something that should be dealt with as a Missing person investigation. Should it be reported that a child is not in school or has left the premises, there needs to be an expectation that the education establishment has taken necessary steps to locate the child before they have contacted the Police. Once reported, information

must be assessed and risks highlighted, and the report treated in the usual way for a Missing person.

See Swindon's Children Missing Education Policy (2017) in the list of general documents at: http://schoolsonline.swindon.gov.uk/sc/Pages/EdWel.aspx .

11. Notification of missing children

Where a looked after child goes missing their allocated social worker is responsible for notifying CSC managers in line with local procedures. Social workers are also responsible for notifying the child's parents or anyone else with parental responsibility but *only when the child is classed as missing* and where this is consistent with the child's welfare.

If the child has been removed from their placement contrary to their care plan where they are subject of an Interim Care Order or Care Order this will require an immediate referral to the police.

12. Reporting the child as missing

The following information needs to be provided to the police when a child is being reported as missing:

- details about the child's family or care placement, including names of parents/carers, address and any contact details for the child, and the child's legal status
- a physical description of the child
- information on friends and family and/or other possible locations
- details of the circumstances of the child going missing, including the time and whom they were last seen with
- a recent photograph of the child
- details of any mobile phone numbers/email addresses

The police will prioritise missing children reports and their response; professionals should refer to the table of risk levels when reporting (see section 6.5)

13. Locating the child

Although the police have lead responsibility for locating a missing child, parents, carers and professionals may all have vital information that could help and it is important that agencies working with the child share any information they have.

Children may continue to attend school or clubs and activities or try to contact friends whilst missing; if a school or service has any knowledge of a missing child attending, being seen or contacting others, this should be shared with the police and the rest of the professional network.

For looked after children, enquiries should be made with the child's immediate and extended family or any other network of friends. It should be made clear to them that it is an expectation that they persuade the child to return to their placement in the event that they make contact.

Consideration should also be given to checking the child's email or social networking accounts to see if they are still being accessed.

14. Case Escalation / Need to Know

Where a missing child has not returned within 24 hours the Swindon need to know procedure and Wiltshire CSC local escalation procedures will apply so that senior managers are sighted on the case to make informed decisions as to which resources may be considered relevant to locate and safeguard the child in cooperation with Senior Police Officers

15. Informing the media

In missing children cases where there is a high level of risk, the police may consider using media coverage as a means of enhancing the investigation. This will be discussed with parents and social workers in advance.

- Where a child lives at home, any decision to inform the media will be taken by the child's parents in consultation with the police.

- Where a child is accommodated by CSC, this decision will be taken jointly by the Director, following consultation with the allocated social worker and their manager, the police and the child's parents.

- If the child is on a Care Order, the Director will make the decision to inform the media but will inform parents in advance where this is in the child's best interests.

16. Dealing with the child's return

16.1   Prevention Interview

Once a child is found or returns home, the police will conduct a Prevention Interview to establish what has happened to the child whilst missing and check their general welfare. This will also look at whether the child:

- has suffered any harm
- has been the victim of any offence
- has committed any offence

If the child is returning home, the police should also establish whether there are any child protection issues and if it is safe for the child to return there. As a result of these checks, the police will decide what further action to take in terms of referring the child on for services.

A Prevention Interview will be carried out for all children returning home. However, for children who frequently go missing from care placements the police will decide on a case by case basis whether to conduct the check or whether this may be carried out by the allocated social worker.

16.2   Return Interview

A Return Home Interview should be offered to all children who have been reported missing; unless it is assessed and recorded by MASH/FCP that it is not appropriate. (An example would be that one parent has agreed for a child to stay out but not communicated this to the other parent)

The purposes of the interview is to give the child an opportunity to speak to someone about why they go missing – 'push and pull factors' - and explore what help and support they need, address their reasons for going missing, and provide them with information on how to stay safe.

It is important that the interview is in depth and carried out by someone independent of the child's care but also that the child has a good relationship with and feels comfortable talking to the interviewer about their experiences.

Where a young person refuses to engage in a return home interview, the worker should obtain relevant information from the parents or carers. Information from the return home interview should be used to inform case planning.

Police will be notified when a RHI has taken place and content shared if agreed with the child.

Any Information obtained during the RHI that may affect any future risk assessment or assist in finding the child should they go missing again, should be shared with the police and other relevant agencies.

16.3   Further work on return

Where the child has gone missing from a care placement, their social worker and their Independent Reviewing Officer will discuss the Care Plan and whether any adjustments are needed to manage the child's vulnerabilities related to going missing. They may convene a LAC review to discuss what support is needed to avoid further missing episodes.

When a child is returning to school following a missing episode, the school should consider holding a reintegration meeting with parents, carers and social workers so that the return to school can be properly planned.

The reintegration meeting should look at what the school can do to help the child catch up on missed work and any support that can be offered to reduce the risk of the child going missing again.

17 Children missing in specific circumstances

17.1 Children at risk of child exploitation

Unauthorised absences, returning home or to placements late and going missing on a frequent basis are all possible indicators of sexual and criminal exploitation. Patterns and frequency of absence or going missing are likely to rise as the child becomes more involved in the exploitation.

Frequent absences and missing incidents need to be considered in the light of the possibility that the child is being groomed for or may already be involved in criminal or sexual exploitation.

Professionals should refer to the SSCB and WSCB protocols for information on indicators to be aware of and what action to take where there are suspicions of sexual exploitation.

See http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/swindon/p_ch_sexual_exploit.html

17.2 Trafficked children

The illegal and secretive nature of trafficking can mean that traffickers may take all possible steps to stop the child from coming into contact with agencies and professionals in an effort to hide their activities and maintain control over the child. One method of achieving this is to move the child on quickly. Trafficked children may also be moved on because the nature or location of the exploitation changes over time. A national referral risk mechanism risk assessment (NRM) should be undertaken.

17.3 Children from other local authority (OLAs) areas

A child from another area may come to the attention of Wiltshire police or approach CSC for help. In these circumstances, Wiltshire Police or the CSC team will contact the child's home authority and negotiate with them to arrange their safe return. Out of hours, this will be carried out by the EDS.

If the child is in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm, the police and CSC will use statutory powers of intervention under the Children Act 1989 to ensure the child's immediate safety and welfare before referring the matter back to the home authority.

When the child returns from the missing episode they will be offered a return interview by a worker/volunteer, independent of their care, arranged in liaison with the child's social worker as detailed in section 14.2 above.

17.4 Abduction, forced marriage, FGM and removal from the UK

If it is suspected that a child has been or may be abducted and removed from the UK, normally due to disputes over residency or custody, parents should be advised to contact Wiltshire Police for details on what action can be taken.

Forced marriage involves the obtaining of consent to marry by duress, threats and violence. If there are concerns that a young woman has gone missing because of a forced marriage, social workers and professionals should refer to the government guidance "The Right to Choose" for details of what action to take. http://www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/3849543/forced-marriage-right-to- choose

If it is feared that the child may be removed from the UK for the purposes of forced marriage, professionals should contact the Forced Marriage Unit based in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

If there are concerns that a young girl may be removed from the UK for the purposes

of female genital mutilation (FGM) professionals should follow the SSCB or WSCB guidance and contact the police and CSC as a matter of urgency. Information is available from the government services and information website: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/female-genital-mutilation

17.5 Missing from education

Any concern of a child missing education should be reported to the Local Authority through the Education Welfare Service. All schools have an allocated link Education Welfare Officer to whom reports should be made. The relevant action will be taken to establish the whereabouts of the child and, where possible, be involved in making arrangements for them to return to full time education.

If a child is removed from a school roll to be educated at home schools are required to inform the Education Welfare Service. Contact will then be made with the parents / carers to establish the suitability of the proposed education.

Any concerns regarding a child's safety or wellbeing will result in the appropriate referral to Children's Services.

For Swindon: Full details of actions that will be taken can be found in Swindon's Children Missing Education policy available on the schools online website at: http://schoolsonline.swindon.gov.uk/sc/Pages/EdWel.aspx.

For Wiltshire: refer to Operational Children's Services Children Missing Education Policy April 2015

17.6 Prevent duty

Local authorities are among the key agencies vital to preventing young people being drawn into terrorism. Going missing may be a sign of children and young people being pulled into terrorism. Workers should be mindful of this when assessing the needs of children who go missing.

One of the key requirements of the Prevent Duty is that staff know how to identify people at risk of radicalisation or extremism and the safeguarding pathways they should use. If you are concerned that an individual may be at risk of radicalisation, you should treat this as you would any other safeguarding issue; and escalate it using your normal, internal procedures, such as informing your safeguarding lead and/or LADO.

18 Resources and support

All children who go missing will be offered a return home interview and referred on to suitable services depending on their level of need. Parents and carers will also be signposted to suitable support and resources. The following resources are available.

Missing people
www.missingpeople.org.uk
116 000
Working with young people and adults who go missing and their families. Advice and information for professionals working with young people who run away or go missing.

Muslim Youth Helpline
www.myh.org.uk
020 7435 8171
18 Rosemont Road NW3 6NE

Childline
www.childline.org.uk
0800 1111

Reunite
www.reunite.org.uk
01162 556234
Advice and help for parents whose children have been removed from the UK.

Railway Children
www.railwaychildren.org.uk
01270 757 596
Advice, support and outreach work for young people on the streets and advice for adults
working with them.

19 Review of protocol

This protocol will be reviewed on a 12 monthly basis by members of Swindon and
Wiltshire's CE and Missing Safeguarding Children Board sub-groups.

Appendix 1: Wiltshire Return home interview guide and record

Form Details		
Form Start Date:	**Worker Name:**	
Person Details		
Name:	**CareFirst ID:**	
DoB / EDD:	**Gender:**	
Address:	**Tel No:**	
Details		
Has the Police referral about this missing/absent incident been up loaded to Carestore		
Date missing		
Time missing		
Missing or Absent		
Missing		
Date returned		
Time returned		
How long was the child / YP missing		
1. Under 24 hours 2. 24-72 Hours 3. Over 72 hours		
Has the child / young person engaged with the return interview		
Is the young person happy for the information from this return interview to be shared appropriately		
Date of return interview		
Time of return interview		
Location of return interview		
People present		
Young Person's view		

Young Person's view contd.
18

Reasons identified by the young person for going missing or running away

Events during missing episode -- what was happening

Contact during episode -- who were they with

How did they feel

What next

	Potential Push Factors
Abuse or neglect	Yes/ No / Not Applicable
Family break up	Yes/ No / Not Applicable
Poor relationship with parents	Yes/ No / Not Applicable
	Potential Pull Factors
Domestic violence	Yes/ No / Not Applicable

Parental substance misuse or mental health	Yes/ No / Not Applicable
Mental health or substance misuse	Yes/ No / Not Applicable
Bullying and harassment	Yes/ No / Not Applicable
Teenage pregnancy	Yes/ No / Not Applicable
Struggling to cope with emotional health	Yes/ No / Not Applicable
Other ¿ please state	
Other ¿ please state	
	Potential Pull Factors
Running back from care placements or to be near friends/family	Yes/ No / Not Applicable
Grooming for potential sexual exploitation or child trafficking	Yes/ No / Not Applicable
Previous incidents of running away	Yes/ No / Not Applicable
Substance misuse	Yes/ No / Not Applicable
Criminal activity	Yes/ No / Not Applicable
Other ¿ please state	

How safe did the young person feel

1. Very safe   2. Safe   3. Not sure   4. Unsafe   5. Very unsafe

Professional opinion on young person's safety during episode

1. Very safe   2. Safe   3. Not sure   4. Unsafe   5. Very unsafe

Overall level of risk

1. No risk   2. Some risk   3. Risk   4. Significant risk   5. Severe risk

Has the information gathered from this assessment been used to inform the Single Assessment and Plan	
Evidence to support this	

Select the outcome to automatically send an alert to the Emerald Team

Completion	
Completed By:	**Date:**
Worker:	
Tel:	
Address:	

Appendix 2: Swindon Return home interview guide and record

Swindon Return Home Interview
Personal Details

Full Name:		Date of birth:
Address/contact details:		Date and time of RI:
		Location of RI:
Date and time missing:		Date and time returned:
Missing or absent?		Duration:
People present:		
Consent to share?		
Is the young person happy for the information from this return interview to be shared appropriately? (Where there are safeguarding concerns, or if a crime has been committed this information can't be kept confidential, and will be shared appropriately regardless of consent).		
Young person's view:		

How safe did they feel?	☺ Very safe Safe ☺ Not sure - Unsafe ☹ Very unsafe

Suggested interview topics to be considered
Reasons identified by the young person for going missing or running away
What caused them to run away?
Was this the first time the young person has gone missing?
Did the young person run away alone or with others?

Did they try to resolve any problem before it caused them to run away and if so why didn't this work?

Does this trigger still exist?
Events during missing episode – what was happening?
Where did the young person stay?
How did they get access to food/money/clothing/showers etc.?
Did they seek medical help?
Did they maintain certain patterns i.e.: stay at school?
Did they get involved in criminal activity?
How long did they stay away for?
What led to them to return or be found?
Contact during episode - who were they with?
Did they get help from anyone whilst they were missing?.
Did they enter into any relationships, particularly any which made them feel uncomfortable?
Were they harmed or at risk of harm from other people?
How did they feel?
Did they feel mentally/emotionally healthy?
Did they feel bullied, pressured or coerced?
Were there signs of stress, depression or self-harm?
Were they involved in substance misuse?

How did they feel about returning?
What next?
Do the things that caused the young person to run away still exist?

What does the young person see as the risks involved with running away again?

What alternatives to running away might there be?

What does the young person think might be done to prevent them from running away again?

Reasons identified by the child/young person for going missing or running away

Potential push factors	Potential pull factors
• Abuse or neglect • family break up • poor relationship with parents • domestic violence • parental substance misuse or mental health • mental health or substance misuse • bullying and harassment • teenage pregnancy • struggling to cope with emotional health	• running back from care placement or to be near friends/family • grooming for potential sexual exploitation or child trafficking • previous incidents of running away • substance misuse • criminal activity

Profession opinion on young person's safety during episode:

Overall level of risk:

Does the child/ parent carer agree with the professional opinion?
Next steps:

Person filling in this form

Name: **Contact details:**

Please return a copy of this form to referring Social Work Team and MASH@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk