

MISSING CHILD PROTOCOL & POLICE LIAISON STRATEGY

Prepared on behalf of: Praveen Videlap

Site address: 29 Cartmel Close, Unsworth, Bury, BL9 8JA

Application type: Full Planning Permission

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1.0 Introduction

This Missing Child Protocol and Police Liaison Strategy has been prepared in support of the application for Full Planning Permission for the proposed children's care home at 29 Cartmel Close, Unsworth, Bury, BL9 8JA. It sets out the operational framework governing the home's response when a young person goes missing from care and describes arrangements for liaison with Greater Manchester Police.

The protocol is developed in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Children Who Run Away or Go Missing from Home or Care (2014), the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 as amended, the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015, and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026).

2.0 Safeguarding Framework

The safety and whereabouts of every young person in the home's care is a safeguarding matter of the highest priority, in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026). Missing from care incidents are treated with the same urgency as any other safeguarding concern. The Registered Manager serves as designated safeguarding lead and ensures this protocol is understood and followed by all staff at all times.

3.0 Prevention Measures

Prevention is the primary response to missing incidents. The home's care model minimises the likelihood of young people going missing through consistent, trusting relationships and proactive management of individual risk factors and known triggers. Each young person's care plan includes a dedicated section on any history of missing episodes and specific preventive strategies. Staff are trained to recognise early behavioural indicators of potential absence and to intervene therapeutically before incidents occur.

4.0 Definition of Missing

A young person is considered missing when absent without staff knowledge or agreement, or when failing to return at the agreed time with whereabouts unknown — regardless of age or circumstances. A young person is considered absent (rather than missing) where their whereabouts are known but they have not returned at the agreed time. Absent incidents are reviewed to assess whether reclassification as missing is appropriate.

5.0 Response Procedure

On identifying an absence, the staff member will immediately notify the Registered Manager or most senior staff member on duty. An internal search of the property and immediate surroundings is conducted; attempts are made to contact the young person by telephone or through known contacts; and known frequented locations are checked where safe to do so. If the young person is not located within a timeframe appropriate to their individual risk profile, Greater Manchester Police will be contacted and a missing person report submitted. The young person's social worker and the placing

authority's out-of-hours team will also be notified. A detailed log of all actions is maintained throughout.

6.0 Police Liaison

The home will establish a positive working relationship with the local neighbourhood policing team within Greater Manchester Police before commencing operations. All missing person reports will be made in accordance with statutory guidance. The home will participate in any multi-agency meetings on missing, exploitation, and trafficking (MET) convened by Greater Manchester Police or Bury's local authority. Contextual safeguarding risks, including criminal and sexual exploitation, are considered particularly acute for older teenage residents and will be subject to heightened vigilance throughout.

7.0 Return and Follow-Up

On return, staff ensure the young person is safe and receives any required medical attention. An independent return interview is offered within 72 hours, conducted by a professional independent of the home, to understand the reasons for absence and identify any risks encountered. Findings are shared with the social worker and commissioning authority and used to update risk assessments and prevention strategies.

8.0 Recording and Review

All missing incidents are recorded in full in the incident log and reviewed monthly by the Registered Manager. All incidents are notified to Ofsted as required by the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015.

9.0 Conclusion

This protocol demonstrates that the proposed home has robust, legally compliant, and operationally sound arrangements for responding to missing from care incidents across the full age range of its residents. Bury Metropolitan Borough Council is invited to note that these arrangements are consistent with best practice across England and raise no material planning concern.