

# STOCKPORT MISSING CHILDREN STRATEGY

## *Prevention, Protection & Provision*

Date issued: June 2017

Date to be Reviewed: June 2019

The partners of Stockport Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) are committed to the safeguarding of ALL children resident in the authority and recognise that children who are missing both from their place of residence and or schools are likely to be more at risk of exploitation and abuse.

This strategy and associated action plan is an agreed joint strategy between key agencies that make up the SSCB and has been developed to ensure a consistent approach to missing children across the borough and to ensure information is shared so that services are cohesive and adequately able to safeguard children who go missing or who may be at risk of going missing.

Partners have responsibility for managing risks in relation to missing children. This strategy seeks to clarify the purpose of intent across the partnership, to ensure, we know who our most vulnerable children are, we share information about those children and we effectively plan to safeguard them so that children are supported throughout their journey across services and services are integrated to respond at all levels of need.

It is recognised that Stockport has a disproportionate amount of private residential children's care home across the Borough and this brings additional demand due to persistent missing incidents. This strategy sits underneath the Greater Manchester Standardised Approach to dealing with Missing and Absent Children and Young People across Greater Manchester. This policy provides detailed guidance about managing children missing from home and care. [http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_ch\\_missing\\_home\\_care.html](http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_ch_missing_home_care.html)

### **Children Missing**

Research has shown that children are more likely to go missing than adults and this is likely to place them at a greater risk of abuse and harm from child sexual exploitation, homelessness, crime and drug and alcohol use. (Missing Children and Adults Home Office 2011). For the purpose of this strategy missing children is used as a generic term but includes children missing from their family home (MFFH), children missing from care (MFH) and also includes those children who are deemed absent, absconding or have runaway.

The term CME (children missing education) refers to 'a compulsory school age child who is not on a school roll or being educated otherwise' Children and young people missing from education are at increased risk of poor education outcomes which in turn can limit life choices and chances. These children may also be at increased risk of neglect. Similarly children experiencing abuse or neglect may be more likely to go missing from education and so these children for the purpose of this strategy are included in the definition of missing.

**Strategic Priorities:**

**PREVENTION, PROTECTION & PROVISION**

The Aim of these priority areas are to improve the response and systems relating to Missing Children in Stockport, to inform the development of the joint Missing Hub and to improve intelligence, data and trend analysis to give an accurate assessment of the problem:

**Objective 1 – Prevention**

**REDUCE THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN THAT GO MISSING**

- Raise awareness of risks relating to missing episodes with children, young people and their carers.
- Review workforce development plan to ensure practitioners, so they know how to respond if a young person is missing.
- Establish links with professional and national bodies to ensure guidance is up-to-date and relevant.

**Objective 2 - Protection**

**REDUCE THE RISK OF HARM CAUSED TO THOSE CHILDREN WHO GO MISSING**

- Improve processes that respond to missing children and young people.
- Improve information-sharing between partners through effective systems and improved intelligence flow.
- Establish daily tasking model to review and respond to needs of missing children.
- Offer all children that go missing high quality independent return interviews.
- Establish effective data collection mechanisms to establish trends and patterns.
- Develop a dynamic understanding of the children who are priority cases due to their enhanced risk of CSE and repeat missing incidents.

**Objective 3 – Provision**

**PROVIDE MISSING CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES/CARERS WITH SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE**

- Establish robust multi-agency risk assessments and care plans.
- Provide interventions to young people who require it.
- Provide regular reports to SSCB and relevant sub-groups.
- Engage with the Residential Providers Forum.

## STOCKPORT MISSING CHILDREN ACTION PLAN

	Recommendation	Key Actions – what will we do	Who will do it	Progress and evidence – how are we doing?	Target Date	RAG
<b>Objective 1: PREVENTION: REDUCE THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN THAT GO MISSING</b>						
	Raise awareness of risks relating to missing episodes with children, young people and their carers.	Missing Hub to work with partners and organise user forums to raise awareness of risks associated with going missing.	Missing Hub	Residential Provider Forum established and briefings provided on Missing Processes.	May 2017	
			Residential Care Homes Provider Forum.	Step by Step briefing sheets prepared for Residential Providers.	May 2017	
			Strategic Missing Lead(s)	Briefings prepared for SSCB website and Stockport Family 2 page guides available on the council website.	Jan 2017	
			Children's Society (Footsteps Project)	Children's Society (Footsteps) Project to offer for young people who go missing and their families.	June 2017	
			GMP (Stockport Division)	Thematic focus in the Spring 2017 term of children and young people's school attendance and the associated responsibilities of professionals.	April 2017	
				The Police have established Threat, Harm & Risk meetings where persistent MFH are discussed and co-ordinated multi-agency decisions taken to address this, including working with parents and care homes.	June 2017	
Review workforce	Develop training packages	MASSH	Organisational Development in	June/July 2017		

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Key Actions – what will we do</b>	<b>Who will do it</b>	<b>Progress and evidence – how are we doing?</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>RAG</b>
	development plan to ensure practitioners, so they know how to respond if a young person is missing.	and briefings for practice staff and partners.	Missing Hub Aspire Team Workforce Development Children’s Social Care Out of Hours Team SSCB Training Sub Neighbourhood Policing Teams	discussions with MASSH to roll out training and awareness packages across Stockport Family workforce and relevant partners.  Specific briefings required for Social Care Teams and OOH. Arrange Stockport Family Learning Circles once Missing Hub fully established.  Enhance the intelligence-sharing between Complex Safeguarding Team (Aspire) and Missing Hub for high risk missing cases with CSE marker.	Aug 2017    June 2017	
	Establish links with local professional and national bodies to ensure guidance is up-to-date and relevant.	CEOP, Missing Person’s Bureau database and contacts to be established.  Develop links with GM Asylum Seekers Teams, UK Border Control etc.	MASSH Aspire Team Missing Hub GMP	Relevant staff to ensure they are appraised of the latest guidance and recommendations. Reflect in training and workforce development.  Links with police in place to ensure that all appropriate steps taken to liaise with national agencies to track and locate high risk missings.	July 2017  April 2017	

**Objective 2: PROTECTION: REDUCE THE RISK OF HARM CAUSED TO THOSE CHILDREN WHO GO MISSING**

	Recommendation	Key Actions – what will we do	Who will do it	Progress and evidence – how are we doing?	Target Date	RAG
	Improve processes that respond to missing children and young people.	<p>Ensure effective multi-agency meetings are in place at both a strategic and operational level.</p> <p>Review current processes at each point of referral to ensure systems are fit for purpose and the process is seamless and review mechanisms in place.</p>	<p>SSCB Complex Safeguarding Group</p> <p>Missing from Home (MFH) Operational Group</p> <p>Children Missing Education (CME) Operational Group</p> <p>MASSH daily briefings.</p> <p>Missing Hub Daily briefings.</p> <p>MASSH weekly review meeting.</p> <p>GMP Pacesetter Meetings</p> <p>Aspire (Complex Safeguarding Team)</p> <p>Children’s Society (Footsteps Project)</p>	<p>Strategic oversight through SSCB via the SSCB Strategic Complex Safeguarding Group (merger of Children at Risk &amp; CSE Strategic Sub).</p> <p>Operational Sub-Groups (MFH, CME, CSE forum) report through the Complex Safeguarding Group.</p> <p>Previous Madison/MASE processes have evolved into the Missing Hub, based within the MASSH, to create a daily tasking model and expedite actions.</p> <p>Agreed pathways in place for referrals to MASE for High Risk Missings. Establishing pathways for Triage from 1<sup>st</sup> response team to signpost if unmet needs identified and EHA required.</p> <p>Updating pathway plans and process-mapping taking place to constantly review data exchange from police to LA.</p> <p>Missing Hub established. Co-ordinators and Officers. Joint agency with the police in progression. Ensure morning Pacesetter meeting feeds into MASSH Daily Tasking meeting.</p> <p>CME Officer based permanently in the</p>	May/ June 2017	

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				MASSH and will link through to Hub.		
	Improve information-sharing between partners through effective systems and improved intelligence flow.	Review Information-sharing processes to ensure that relevant services are informed in a timely manner.	SSCB SSCB Complex Safeguarding Group Operational Groups (CME, MFH & CSE) Business Intelligence MASSH/Missing Hub Business Support GMP	4 Business Support Officers OPUS vetted and training delivered. Continual review of MASSH/Contact Centre information flow from GMP to improve pathways and processes to expedite information. Social Care EIS updated daily. Information from the Participation Team spreadsheet extracted to EIS. Progression of a joint Missing Hub with the police will facilitate improved and more efficient information-sharing. This will be enhanced by having the divisional Missing Person SPOC.	Apr/May 2017 (continually under review to develop intelligence and information-sharing processes)	
	Establish daily tasking model to review and respond to needs of missing children.	Ensure that a daily tasking model is in operation with attendance from the relevant agencies, and effective strategic oversight that ensure actions are recorded and implemented.	MASSH Missing Hub Aspire Team GMP	Daily tasking model operational within the MASSH and the Aspire Team. The Missing Hub will adopt the same model and ensure consistent information flow and link with the police daily Pacesetter meetings. Missing Hub established, progressing to joint agency through LA and the police. Missing co-ordinators, Missing Officers and Police Officers.	June 2017	

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				Responsibilities include chairing daily tasking, reviewing all cases, convening strategy meetings and carrying out return interviews.		
	Offer all children that go missing high quality independent return interviews within timescales.	All young people who go missing from care or home to be offered an independent return interview following on from the initial GMP Safe and Well check.	Missing Hub GMP Officers MASSH Children’s Society (Footsteps Project)	<p>GMP carry out initial ‘Safe and Well’ checks on all children that go missing. The Missing Hub are informed of all missing incidents and ALL children are offered an independent return interview through this team, or by the home placing authority.</p> <p>Explore different strategies that engage children who go missing and ensure compliance.</p> <p>Return interviews within timescales (72 hours) still present a challenge but are improving. Analysis being developed based on information from children, carers and residential providers to improve understanding of non-compliance.</p> <p>Missing Officers recruitment widened to vary core hours to include evening and weekends.</p> <p>Agreed pathways in place for referrals to MASE for High Risk Missings.</p>	July/August 2017	

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				<p>Establishing pathways for Triage from 1<sup>st</sup> response team to signpost if unmet needs identified and EHA required.</p> <p>Missing Officers to work jointly with police outside core hours to ensure children are identified and offered the earliest interventions. Will also explore vetting options to access police systems.</p> <p>Listen to children and review the reasons they go missing and inform strategy meetings and action planning.</p> <p>Develop more mediation and creative engagement with residential providers.</p> <p>Children’s Society (Footsteps) Project offer enhanced interventions for children who go missing between 2-5 times.</p>		
	Establish effective data collection mechanisms to establish trends and patterns.	Consistent review to be developed through data and business intelligence to inform practice and strategic direction.	Business Intelligence Business Support GMP Data MASSH Children’s Society (Footsteps Project)	<p>Regular reports created to review Missing Data from Business Intelligence.</p> <p>Business Support staff OPUS vetted and trained.</p> <p>Previous Participation Team data linked with Business Intelligence to ensure spreadsheet data incorporated</p>	Apr/May 2017	



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			SSCB Complex Safeguarding Group  CME,MFH & CSE Operational Groups	in trend data in EIS.  Missing Problem Profile commissioned joint through LA/GMP (through SSP). Approved at SSCB and Police SLT.  Children’s Society (Footsteps) data to inform and contribute through enhanced intervention packages.  CME improved operational oversight and data collection.		
	Develop a dynamic understanding of the children who are priority cases due to their enhanced risk of CSE and repeat missing incidents.	Develop continual analysis of the highest priority children, emerging issues and the underlying causes.  Develop a joint problem profile which develops an analysis of children who go missing and reviews the structural and functional reasons.  Link missing problem profile with CSE equivalent and ASB Strategy.	SSCB Complex Safeguarding Group  CME,MFH & CSE Operational Groups  Business Intelligence  GMP  Missing Hub  Children’s Society (Footsteps Project)  Aspire Team	Problem profile developed for the missing cohort. Similar profiling being developed for CSE profiling.  Daily tasking model established that links through MASSH and Aspire Team.  Business Intelligence beginning to develop further analysis beyond the data, that provides a narrative understanding of underlying factors associated with missing children incidents.  MFH and CME operational groups meet regularly to oversee QA procedures and compliance with corporate procedures and legislation.	July/Aug 2017	

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				<p>MFH operational group has standing agenda item to ensure scrutiny of repeat missings.</p> <p>Data will inform the newly established ASB Panels that are operating across the Borough to ensure cross-referencing and inform the ASB strategy in joint responses where relevant.</p>		
<b>Objective 3: PROVISION: PROVIDE MISSING CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES/CARERS WITH SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE</b>						
	Establish robust multi-agency risk assessments and care plans.	Develop effective multi-agency liaison that ensures information is shared, partners are consulted and children are effectively safeguarded.	<p>Safeguarding Unit</p> <p>Children’s Social Care</p> <p>GMP</p> <p>SSCB Complex Safeguarding Group</p>	<p>Ongoing developments regarding pathway planning and signposting. The (Keeping Safe) Plan for young people identified through complex safeguarding processes does not replace existing pathways. Arrangements still in place for MASE pathway for high risk missings and triage through 1<sup>st</sup> response team for unmet need and EHA assessment.</p> <p>Strategy Meetings convened in line with guidance. Responsibility of the Missing Hub.</p>	Aug 2017	
	Provide interventions to young people who require it.	Deliver interventions to priority groups, including repeat missings and those at risk of CSE.	<p>Missing Hub</p> <p>Aspire Team</p> <p>Attendance Team</p>	Missing Hub have a clear focus to assess and provide a ‘tool box’ of preventative measures and effective interventions for children who go missing. This means working jointly	July 2017	

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		Pilot a local mentoring scheme with local professionals (eg; Head Teachers, school professionals)	GMP Schools	with partners, particularly the police.  Flexible working as part of the Missing Officer role to work outside of core hours; evenings and weekends.  CME Officer based within the MASSH.  Look to ‘Adopt’ a Care Home of high demand. Work with some of the high volume missing cases with a view to securing a reduction in missing cases by mentoring.	Sept 2017	
	Provide regular reports to SSCB and relevant sub-groups.	Ensure analysis that reviews data and trends is provided to the SSCB and relevant sub-groups in a timely manner.	Strategic Missing Lead(s)  SSCB Complex Safeguarding Group  CME, MFH & CSE Operational Groups  Business Intelligence	Regular reports delivered strategically and operationally.	Regular reports submitted	
	Engage with the Residential Providers Forum.	Provide updates for residential providers and an engagement process that involves them in	Strategic Lead(s)  Stockport Family	Updates provided to Residential Providers Forum on MFH and CME.  Step by Step guide produced for	May 2017	

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Key Actions – what will we do</b>	<b>Who will do it</b>	<b>Progress and evidence – how are we doing?</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>RAG</b>
		decision-making.	Missing Hub GMP	Residential Care Home providers.		

Date agreed for sign off at SSCB QA & PM Sub Group: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2017 (reviewed in draft)

Date at SSCB: 17<sup>th</sup> July 2017 (approved)