

Looked after Children and young people

Care providers'
information pack

May 2020

Working
together to
keep children
and young
people safe



Leicestershire
County Council



POLICE & CRIME
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WORKING TOGETHER
TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE





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Introduction

Aims of the pack

This pack has been designed by Leicestershire Police, in conjunction with partners involved in children's social care, health, education and local care providers.

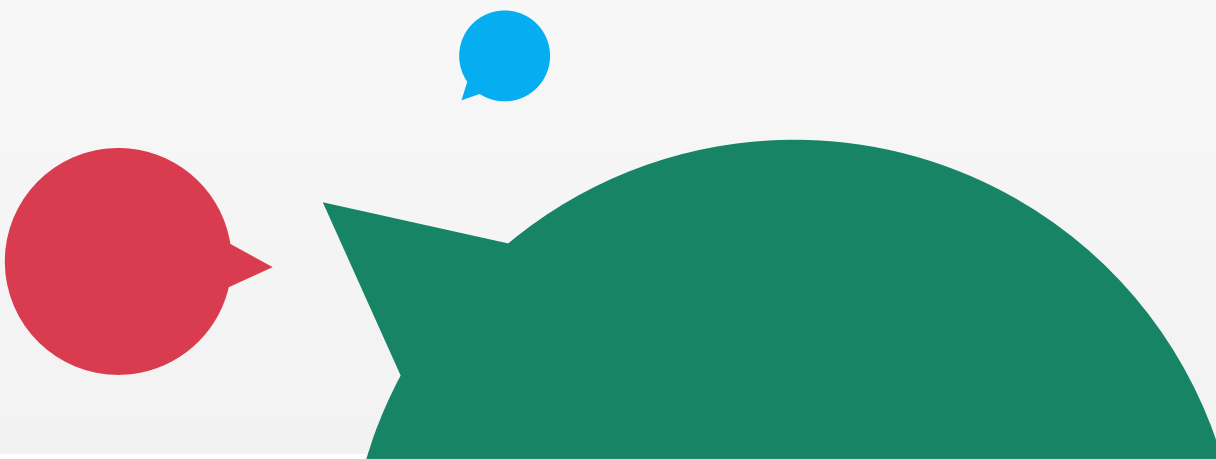
The pack includes useful information regarding police policy and procedure and also information around responding to risks faced by looked after children.

The information pack aims to:

- provide information to care providers and looked after children to promote awareness of the roles and responsibilities of all agencies involved in safeguarding.
- build effective relationships between the police, care providers and looked after children in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
- enable a consistent approach to all incidents involving looked after children.
- improve partnerships to ensure positive outcomes for looked after children.

“Safeguarding children is a fundamental role for Leicestershire Police and its partners. This excellent package has been created to support our children’s homes in doing just that.”

Lord Willy Bach, Police and Crime Commissioner



Looked after children in Leicester, Leicestershire And Rutland



Data extracted from Police system Compact in May 2020 demonstrates reduced figures since introduction of the LAC Pack.

Missing	2017 - 2018	2019 - 2020
Average number of monthly missing reports	345	319
Of those, children under the age of 18	206	179
Of those, number of looked after children	192	96
% of missing reports that relate to under 18-year olds	60%	56%
% of missing child reports that relate to looked after children	93%	53%

The majority of calls from residential homes relate to missing reports.

In the UK a
child is reported
missing every 3
minutes

The term looked after child will be consistently used throughout this document in accordance with legislation and national protocols, however it may be that professionals use other terminology such as Child Looked After or Child In Care

Definitions and risk categories

Definitions*

Missing person

(This is the current National Definition and is currently under review by National Leads for Missing and the College of Policing.)

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

All reports of missing people sit within a continuum of risk from ‘no apparent risk’ (absent) through to high-risk cases that require immediate, intensive action

Repeat missing person

A person who has been reported as missing on more than one occasion within the previous 12 months

Long-term missing person

A person who has been reported missing for at least 28 days

Risk categories*

High risk

The risk of serious harm to the subject or the public is assessed as very likely.

Risk of serious harm has been defined (Home Office 2002 and OASys 2006):

‘A risk which is life threatening and/or traumatic, and from which recovery, whether physical or psychological, can be expected to be difficult or impossible.’

Medium risk

The risk of harm to the subject or the public is assessed as likely but not serious.

Low risk**

The risk of harm to the subject or the public is assessed as possible but minimal.

No apparent risk (Absent)**

There is no apparent risk of harm to either the subject or the public.

* As defined by College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice

** Leicestershire Police will only record a missing child as medium or high risk

When to report a child missing

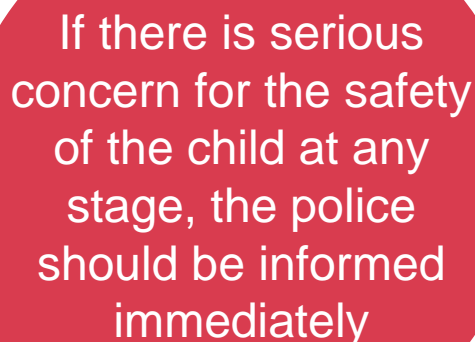
Is the child's whereabouts known or could it be established?

If yes, the child will not be reported as missing.

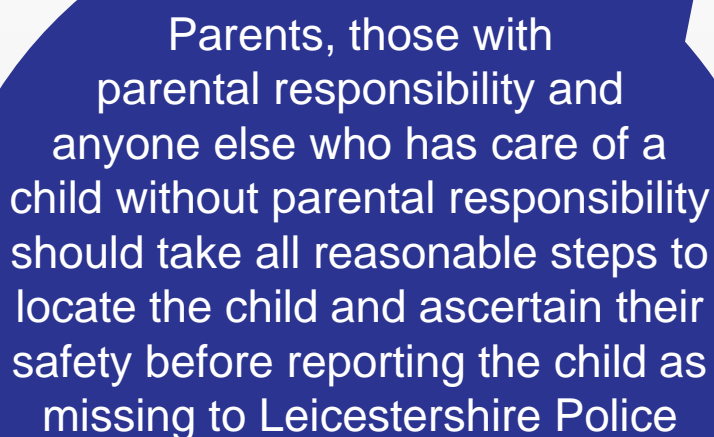

If the location of the child is known or suspected, it is the responsibility of the care provider to collect them. Police assistance will be considered where there are concerns about the safety of the child and / or staff. These circumstances, however, would NOT mean that the child should be categorised as missing.

Placements are expected to undertake the following basic measures to try to locate the missing child if considered safe to do so:

- Search bedroom / accommodation / outbuilding / vehicles.
- Contact known friends and relatives where child may be.
- Visit locations that the child is known to frequent.
- Make reasonable enquiries with local hospitals.
- Reporting to police does not absolve carers of parental responsibility. Efforts to locate the child should continue unless expressly requested not to by police. Some individuals would rather share information with you than the police. A joint approach should be adopted.



If there is serious concern for the safety of the child at any stage, the police should be informed immediately



Parents, those with parental responsibility and anyone else who has care of a child without parental responsibility should take all reasonable steps to locate the child and ascertain their safety before reporting the child as missing to Leicestershire Police

Prior to reporting a child missing

To assist police with their investigation, the following enquiries should be completed by care providers:

1.	List details of friends and acquaintances. The information shared with a carer may differ from that given to a Police Officer.	
2.	Speak with friends, relatives and colleagues. Ask if they know where the missing person may be. Let them know it has been reported to the police. Sometimes they would rather tell you the information before the police.	
3.	Locate diaries, address books, itemised telephone bills, train tickets etc. Sometimes even information which shows where the child has been previously can be a strong indicator of current intentions. Make these available to the police.	
4.	Check the missing person's belongings to see what they might have with them such as clothing, bags, access to money, mobile phones etc.	
5.	Keep a record of all enquiries that you make yourself, including the time and date.	



Contact the police immediately if the missing person returns or you receive information regarding their possible whereabouts

Make a missing report to the police

All reports to Leicestershire Police of a child being missing will be notified to the Contact Management Department (CMD). At the point of the initial report, an incident will be created.

The call-taker will establish the relevant circumstances and make an initial assessment as to whether the child should be recorded as missing (and whether they should be treated as high or medium risk).

The call-taker will use the following set of questions to assist in the decision making / risk assessment process. Parents / carers should have all the appropriate information available to enable them to be able to report a young person as missing.

Report details			
Missing from		Full name	
Date of birth		When / where last seen?	
Who saw them last?		Who were they with?	
Description			
Gender		Build	
Height		Hair length	
Eye colour		Complexion	
Ethnic origin		Clothing	
Marks / scars / tattoos		Footwear / accessories	
Languages spoken			

CMD Question Set

Detail the brief circumstances of going missing		Where, when last seen and by whom?	
What has been done so far to trace this individual?		What is the description of the person including clothing?	
Is this significantly out of character, if so why?		What is the specific concern in this instance (if any)? (e.g. vulnerable due to age, infirmity, mental health or physical illness)	
Any last known intentions or preparations made prior to going missing?		Have they taken any personal items with them – clothing, passport etc?	
Identify any place they may go to and why: specific interest or to find solace / peace and quiet?		Do they have a mobile phone in their possession? (Network and Phone Number required)	
What is the person's last known Home Address?		Are they subject to any Mental Health Section – if so what and why?	

Are they likely to be a victim of crime – if so why?		Are they likely to be the victim of abuse – if so explain (domestic / sexual / racial / homophobic)	
Are they likely to self-harm, attempt suicide – give details		Have they been exposed to harm in any previous missing episode – give details	
Are there any specific medical needs that require medication and if this isn't available what are the effects and timescales		Are they currently at risk of sexual exploitation or on Child Protection register – if so from whom?	
Do they pose a danger to themselves or any other person?		Do they have a history of drug or alcohol abuse (give details)?	
Details of any vehicle used or normal mode of transport if none		Details of messaging and social media used including usernames and passwords if known	
What access do they have to money?		Any other relevant information which may affect risk assessment	

Prevention Interviews

Leicestershire Police must ensure that a prevention interview, formerly known as a "safe and well" check, is completed once a child has been located.

For children in residential placements, the police will accept confirmation from care professionals without the need for an officer to attend the home and visit the child. The prevention interview can be completed by staff with the child and fed back to the police.

The prevention interview will enable police to close the missing report. The police will notify the local authority of the return of the child and any relevant information will be shared.

If it is apparent, upon the return of a child, that they have been the victim of a crime whilst missing, or that they may be in danger or at risk from any person, the police must be asked to attend without delay. This is vital for the protection of the child and for the speedy recovery of evidence.

Should any care provider suspect that a serious offence has occurred whilst the child has been missing, they should consider the preservation of forensic opportunities. These include:

- **Bodily fluids such as blood, saliva, semen on clothing and the individual - the child should be discouraged from washing and immediate advice sought from police**
- **Presence of injuries that could require photographing**
- **Electronic data such as mobile phone, tablets, computers**

The following list is provided as a guide to officers and staff when they are completing a prevention interview. This is not exhaustive and is designed to obtain as much information as possible to prevent future risk and provide necessary safeguarding.

Reasons for going missing	Circumstances while away
<p>Life pressures – school, family, friends, financial, relationship?</p> <p>To clear their head?</p> <p>To get family contact?</p> <p>Were they encouraged to stay out and by whom</p> <p>Were they under the influence of drugs or alcohol?</p> <p>Did they go anywhere that was unfamiliar to them and why?</p> <p>Are they being bullied?</p> <p>Are there mental health concerns?</p> <p>Does the child have learning difficulties?</p>	<p>Transport? How far did they go?</p> <p>Who were they with?</p> <p>What did they do?</p> <p>Where did they stay, shower and change clothes?</p> <p>Did they have any money, access to phones or social media?</p> <p>Did they contact anyone while they were away? Why this person?</p> <p>Were they a witness, victim or perpetrator of any crime?</p> <p>Were they under the influence of drugs or alcohol?</p> <p>Were they hurt, abused, injured or drugged?</p>
Reasons for returning	Vulnerability issues
<p>Why did they return?</p> <p>Would anything have made them return sooner?</p> <p>Who traced them - police, family, friends, carers?</p> <p>If they had not been traced, would they have returned of their own accord and when?</p> <p>Is there any help they would like but were unable to find?</p>	<p>When they were away, did they feel vulnerable or in any danger?</p> <p>Have they got any injuries and if so, what are they?</p> <p>Did they try to get any help whilst away?</p> <p>Did they consider or try to take their own life?</p> <p>Did they talk to anyone prior to leaving about their concerns?</p>

Missing Return Interviews

Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing states that when a child is found they should be offered an independent return interview. The purpose of this interview is to ascertain if the child has come to any harm whilst missing and to build a bigger picture of what the risks are to that child. It is also an important tool in trying to establish what made the child go missing in the first place.


The completion of return home interviews is co-ordinated by the responsible local authority in co-operation with the LLR host authority.

Strategy meetings

Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing also stipulates that a strategy meeting must be convened in the following circumstances:

- When a child has been missing three times in a rolling 90-day period
- When a child is missing for more than 72 hours

It is the responsibility of the child's social worker to arrange the strategy meeting, however any professional may request a meeting if they believe one of the above criteria has been met.



Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing states that when a child is found they should be offered an independent return interview

Statutory obligations

The Children Act 1989 Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010

Legal obligation requiring a responsible authority to notify the host authority when a child in care is moved across boundaries.

Children's Homes Regulations 2015 (Regulation 41)

Legal obligation requiring the registered person for every children's home to notify the host local authority when a child is admitted or discharged.

In order to satisfy this legal observation the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland multi-agency collaboration require placements to complete the **LAC Notification Form** (pages 15-16). **This must be submitted within 24 hours**, along with any relevant documentation and risk assessments, to the relevant local authority email addresses:

Leicestershire County: notificationslac@leics.gov.uk

Leicester City: placements.desk@leicester.gov.uk

Rutland County: childrensreferrals@rutland.gov.uk

In all cases, the form should also be sent to the following addresses:

Leicestershire Police: caiuereferrals@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk

Health: lep-tr.fypclookedafterchildrennotifications@nhs.net



This multi-agency notification form is an essential tool to safeguard children by ensuring agencies are sufficiently informed in respect of known risks

LAC Notification Form (Regulation 41)

Name:		Insert recent photograph:	
Other Name(s):			
Date of Birth:			
Placement address and telephone number:		Arrival date:	
		Departure date:	
Legal status s20 / s21 / s31 etc:		Mobile no:	
Staff ratio:		Handset IMEI:	
DESCRIPTION			
Ethnic origin:		Warning signs:	
Religion:		Smokes cigarettes?	
Language(s):		Drinks alcohol?	
Birthplace / nationality:		Uses drugs? Which drugs?	
Height?		Unique jewellery / possessions	
Build:		Hair colour	
Eye colour:		Accent	
Wears glasses:		Marks / scars / tattoos	
HEALTH			
Physical conditions:		Mental health conditions:	
Communication difficulties:		Other conditions:	
Habits:		NHS Number:	

RESPONSIBLE LOCAL AUTHORITY			
Authority Name:		Team responsible:	
OOH / Duty contact no:		Case reference:	
SOCIAL WORKER'S DETAILS			
Name:		Address:	
Telephone number:		Email:	
SOCIAL WORKER'S TEAM MANAGER DETAILS			
Name:		Address:	
Telephone number:		Email:	
DOCTOR'S DETAILS			
Name:		Address:	
Telephone number:		Email:	
CONTACTS - FAMILY			
Name: Address: Telephone:			
Name: Address: Telephone:			
ANY RELEVANT RISK / MISSING HISTORY (ATTACH RISK ASSESSMENTS IF RELEVANT)			
Staff completing:		Date form completed:	

Once complete please send this form to the relevant local authority:

Leicestershire County: notificationslac@leics.gov.uk

Leicester City: placements.desk@leicester.gov.uk

Rutland County: childrensreferrals@rutland.gov.uk

In all cases, the form should also be sent to the following addresses:

Leicestershire Police: childreferralteam@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk

Leicestershire Police: mpet@Leicestershire.pnn.police.uk

Health: lep-tr.fypclookedafterchildrennotifications@nhs.net

Child Sexual Exploitation

"The sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive something e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money as a result of performing and/or others performing, on them, sexual activities."

D of E: CSE Definition and Guide for Practitioners, 2017

CSE is a form of child abuse

All professionals have a duty to protect children from abuse and exploitation

CSE indicators to look out for:

- Staying out later than expected
- Missing episodes
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- STI's, requesting contraception and terminations
- Unexplained amounts of money, gifts etc
- Being picked up by persons / vehicles
- Exhibiting changes of behaviour
- Excessive or secretive phone use
- Involvement in criminality

Professionals

should use Leicestershire Police's Information Sharing Tool:

(<https://www.leics.police.uk/contact/community-partnership-information>) to share non-urgent information which may be a crucial piece of the puzzle in a CSE case e.g.

- vehicle details (VRM / make / model / colour)
- suspect (names / addresses / telephone numbers)
- unknown visitors / changes in behaviour

Child Criminal Exploitation

Criminal exploitation of children is a form of harm which often goes unrecognised by those best placed to spot its potential victims. "County lines" is the police term for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and market via "deal lines". Gangs use children to move drugs and money to avoid detection.

Criminal exploitation is not limited to county lines and can occur within the locality

A child's involvement in criminal exploitation often leaves signs

Signs of criminal exploitation:

- Persistently going missing and / or being found out-of-area
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones
- Excessive receipt of texts / phone calls
- Relationships with controlling / older individuals or groups
- Involvement in violent crime / unexplained injuries
- Carrying weapons
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks

Any professional working with a child who they think may be at risk of criminal exploitation should share this information with social services. If you believe a person is at immediate risk of harm, you should contact the police

Police point of contact

Leicestershire Police are committed to safeguarding all vulnerable children. Missing Persons Engagement team (MPET) work closely with registered homes and can be used as a point of contact to provide support and advice. (NB: Not for live missing investigations, these enquiries need to be directed to Missing Persons Operations team, MPOT via 101).

MPET staff will endeavour to provide support and advice or act as a conduit to involve neighbourhood colleagues responsible for your policing area where appropriate to prevent missing and minimise risk to children that are a flight risk. Local police should be contacted to provide assistance in respect of preventing crime and anti-social behaviour in and around the home.

What you can expect from the Police:

- Keep knowledge up to date around care protocols
- Help understanding of safeguarding issues and promote understanding throughout the force
- Keep up to date with the children currently living in your placements and be aware of their risks and managements plans
- Help improve decision making by care home providers
- Visit your care home when necessary to offer personal support / advice
- Build relationships with managers and care staff
- Be respectful of care providers policies and procedures, and sensitive to the limitations of other organisations
- Be a point of contact to address minor issues and offer advice
- Attend strategy/professionals meetings when required

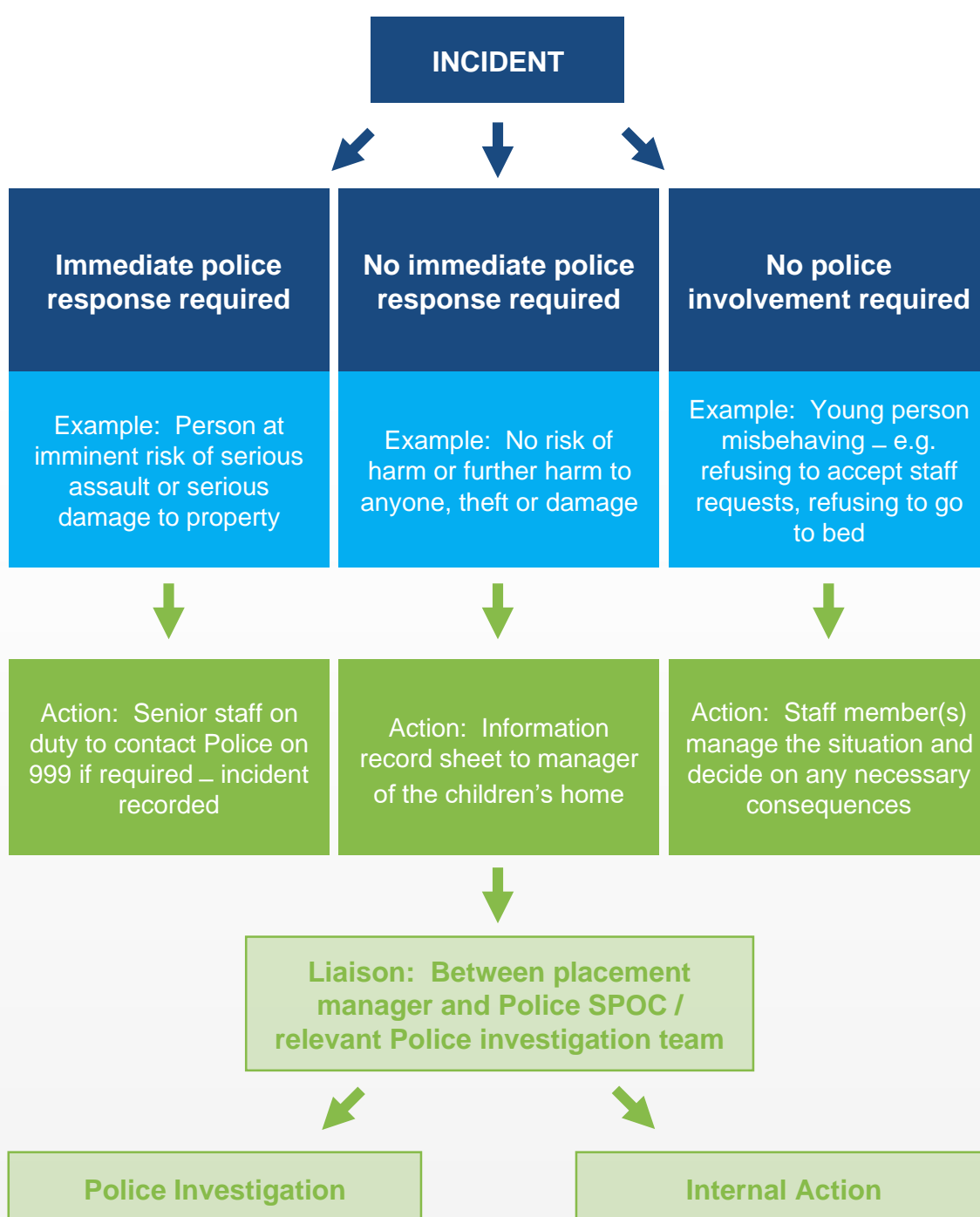
What the Police expect from providers:

- Work with local police to prevent crime and ASB
- Improve understanding of safeguarding issues and offer advice and support
- Positively support interactions between children and the police
- Be open, honest and sensitive to other agencies limitations
- Provide advice around your policies and current legislation
- Ensure all staff have a full knowledge of all children in your home and are up to date with policies and legislation, including all night staff and temporary staff
- Ensure all staff are aware of the 10 point CPS checklist

Joint protocol to reduce prosecution

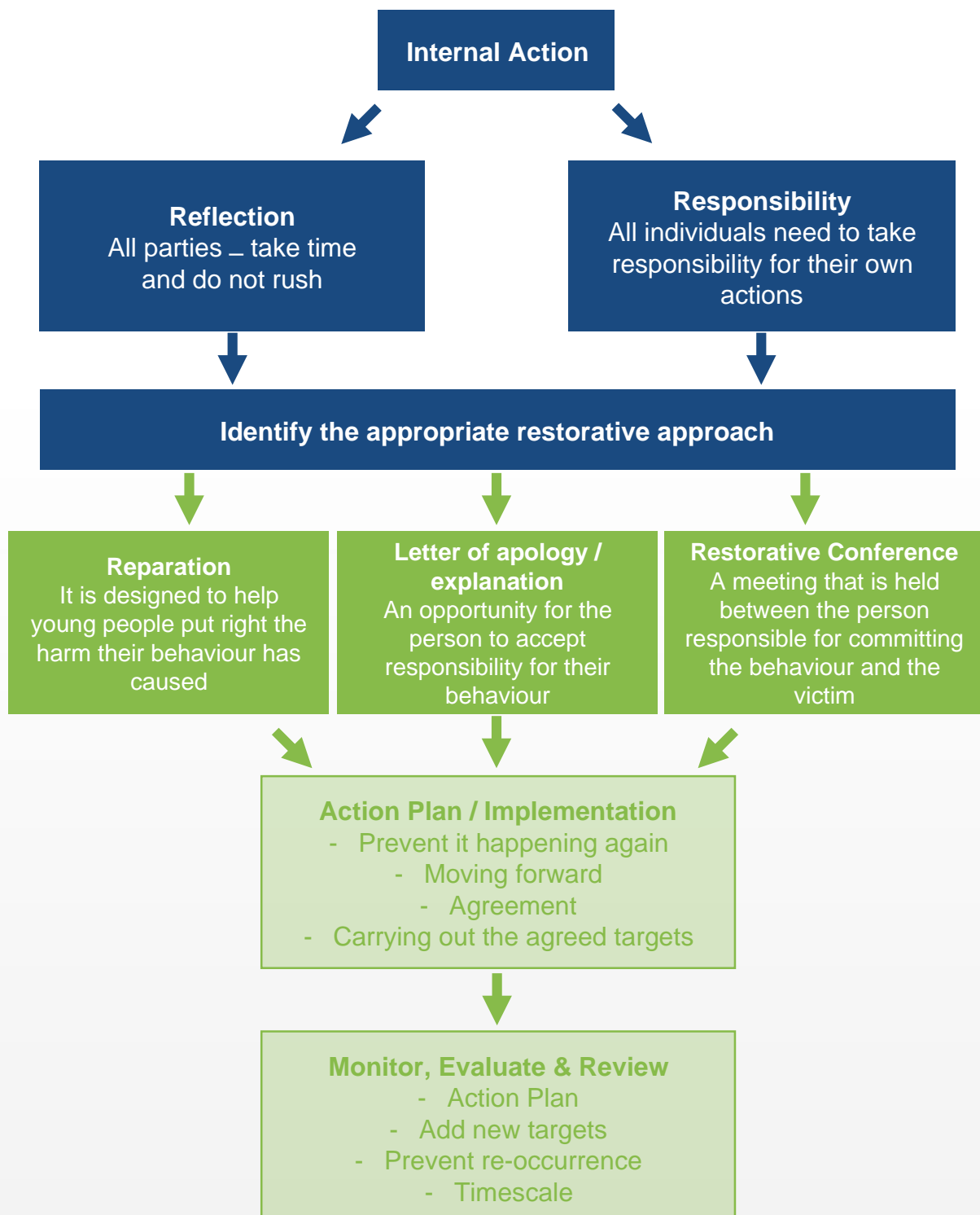
Care homes / supported accommodation – categories of response

Residential staff need to consider both the nature and seriousness of the incident before deciding whether to involve the Police immediately, at a later stage, or whether to involve them at all. The following flowchart is designed to assist the decision making process.



The Restorative Route

Looked after children are currently over-represented in the Criminal Justice System. Use of restorative practices can be the difference between an effective intervention with a young person and them continuing their offending behaviour. The flowchart below sets out the restorative route and provides some example considerations for homes to use when resolving incidents; whether behavioural or low level criminal offending.



Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)

10-Point checklist

Where incidents take place that involve Police attendance, and where there is a likelihood that the young person may be charged with an offence, there is a mandatory responsibility on the Home and the Police to complete the CPS 10-Point Checklist.

Locally this form is also used to inform the joint Police and Youth Offending Service 'Out of Court Disposal Panel' that decides on outcomes for non-charge cases involving Looked after Children.

1.	Disciplinary policy of care provider?
2.	Why have the police been involved and is it as agreed in the policy?
3.	Any informal / disciplinary action already taken? (since incident)
4.	Any apology / reparation (since incident)

5.	Victim's views? (willingness for restorative intervention etc)
6.	Social worker's views? (including any other involved professional)
7.	Care plan for Looked after Child?
8.	Recent behaviour / incidents regarding Looked after Child?
9.	Information about incident from Looked after Child?
10.	Aggravating or mitigating features? (CPS / Police to complete)

Questions 1, 2, 8, 9 & 10 to be completed immediately
 Questions 3-7 to be completed within 3 days



Useful links

Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care__3_.pdf

Children's Homes Regulations (2015)

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/583/made

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/37/contents

Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/10/contents/enacted

Care Standards Act 2000

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/14/contents>

Guide to Children's Homes Regulations, including quality standards

www.gov.uk/government/publications/childrens-homes-regulations-including-quality-standards-guide

National Minimum Standards: Fostering Services

www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/Adoptionandfostering/Page1/DFE-00029-2011





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