

RISK MANAGEMENT BRIEFING

Risk Management Arrangements for Vulnerable Young People

Purpose of briefing note

In recognising the increasing number of vulnerable young people becoming victims of child exploitation, this practice guidance note is a reminder of how Children's Services safeguards adolescents who are at risk of exploitation or are actively being exploited outside of the family home. This is referred to as 'Contextual Safeguarding'. This briefing note also incorporates learning from case audits so that practice is subject to continuous improvement.

This briefing note should be read in conjunction with:

Hertfordshire's Multi-Agency Protocol for Working with Vulnerable Adolescents

Hertfordshire Risk Management Framework and Manual

Multi-Agency Protocol for Working with Children/Young People who Go Missing from Home or Care or who are Vulnerable to Exploitation (revised June 2018)

Children in Need Multi-Agency Protocol and Procedures

The above can be found in:

- [Social Work Procedures](#)
- [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board](#)

Context

During 2017/2018, there have been an increasing number of children and young people who are living at home or in our care that have become victims of child exploitation and this briefing sets out the overview of safeguarding arrangements for such young people using the Hertfordshire model of contextual safeguarding. See Appendix 1 Contextual safeguarding

Preventing vulnerable young people from becoming involved in child exploitation remains a key objective across Hertfordshire and the HSCB Multi-Agency Protocol for Working with Vulnerable Adolescents has been written for and with partners.

Targeted Youth Support (TYS)

TYS use relationship based practice as an approach to respond to contextual safeguarding and has been the model used by Targeted Youth Support since 2014. It recognises that the conventional child protection system was designed to address familial abuse and is not appropriate to address the complex needs and issues of adolescents and in some ways penalises parents who are struggling to deal with the risks posed by other external influences towards their children. TYS therefore works closely with parents, as well as young people. TYS consider the needs of siblings and will call in other services to support them if this is needed as part of a team around the family.

The focus of the work with the family uses a Motivational Interviewing model, building trust and aiming to:

- Build the young person's resilience
- Build the parents resilience and provide coping skills
- Promote attachment between the young person and parents
- Widen the family's support networks
- Refocus the young person/promote aspiration/divert them
- Support the young person to address substance misuse, self –harming or other high risk concerns

YC Hertfordshire

YC Hertfordshire provides youth work, careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) and work related learning (WRL) for 11-19 year olds (up to 25 for young people with LDD). Through the provision of youth projects across the county including youth councils and forums, National Citizen Service and One Stop Shops (OSS). IAG and WRL is delivered in schools and the community including One Stop Shops to support young peoples' progression into employment, training or further education.

The expectation is that Targeted Youth Support and YC Hertfordshire work together with other agencies to prevent child exploitation and to support young people who have been exploited or are missing.

Risk Management

In order to ensure consistency of intervention, every young person who has a pattern of going missing, exploited or vulnerable to exploitation or where there is one single significant incident, a professional judgement will be made as to whether the young person's needs are low and warrant an Early Help intervention (EHM) or the needs warrant a Child & Family(C&F) Assessment. A C&F will be undertaken by a social worker within Targeted Youth Support. If the young person is considered to be a Child in Need following the C&F assessment a CiN Plan/Multi Agency Risk Management Meeting (MARM) will take place where a CIN/MARM plan is to be formulated and will include the risk management plan.

MARM

MARM's are multi-agency risk management meetings that are convened by Children's Services when a child/young person is missing, at risk of repeat missing episodes, subject to exploitation or vulnerable to exploitation. A Multi-Agency Risk Management Meeting (MARM) is attended by the Police, Children Services practitioner and his/her manager and any other professionals involved. Roles, responsibilities and actions are agreed to strengthen risk management planning. A MARM form is available on LCS in order to record actions and outcomes of the meeting and to ensure consistency of minutes and recording.

The CiN/MARM Plan can be managed by an alternatively qualified worker as appropriate and overseen by a social work qualified manager. A clear and up to date risk assessment and CIN/MARM plan including the risk management plan needs to be in place throughout the TYS intervention.

LCS Case Status

The LCS case status needs to be updated to reflect a young person where they are subject to or at risk of CSE and updated when needs and risks of CSE have decreased.

Return Home Interviews

Return Home Interviews need to be offered each time a young person goes missing. These are to be completed on LCS following the Children/Young People Missing from Home or Care or Who are Vulnerable to Exploitation guidance and the information shared by the young person to be included in the risk management plan and Child in Need/MARM plan.

The Return Home Interview must be completed, using the *Missing Person Return Interview* form embedded into the *Missing Person Episode* in LCS.

NB: This form must be completed for **ALL** Missing Person Episodes opened on LCS, regardless of whether the Return Home Interview Criteria is met.

Where the Return Home Interview criteria has been met and the Return Home Interview has been completed, the *Missing Person Assessment* form embedded into the *Missing Person Episode* in LCS must also be completed to assess the outcome of the Return Home Interview and Missing Person Episode – See [Appendix 5](#) of the Children/Young People Missing from Home or Care Who are Vulnerable to Exploitation Procedures for further guidance on completing the Missing Person Episode task and forms.

Hertfordshire Risk Management Manual provides guidance which includes risk assessment tools and outlines processes for managers and practitioners in managing risk in their work with children, young people and families in order to deliver statutory and voluntary interventions which are effective and of a high standard.

Further, the Manual aims to ensure our risk management systems are robust by supporting and assisting practitioners at all levels to approach the task of risk management with more confidence and competence and to clearly articulate their concerns to the appropriate forum.

These forums include:

- SEARCH
- TYS Risk Panel
- Transition to Adulthood Panel
- CiN Panel

See Appendix 2 for Panels to identify the appropriate panel and Appendix 3 for the terms of reference for each panel.

Care Leavers

When a care leaver aged 18 and over goes missing, the Personal Advisor will:

- Ensure case records reflect when the young person went missing and when they were found.
- Ensure enquiries are made to locate the young person.
- Escalate the missing episode to the Team Manager to jointly determine further actions required, including reporting the young person missing to the Police.
- Ensure young people are visited and spoken to upon their return to assess their welfare and address missing episode.
- Ensure missed visits/appointments are followed up with young person immediately to ascertain their welfare; in particular for those who have a history of going missing.
- Ensure pathway plans address managing risks of young people with additional vulnerabilities (i.e. mental ill health, previous missing episodes, etc.)
- The LCS case status needs to be updated to reflect a care leaver where they are subject to or at risk of CSE and updated when needs and risks of CSE have decreased.

The police will treat the young person as an adult and will lead on the search to find the missing young adult in keeping with their protocol in dealing with an 'adult at risk', which may include a "Safe and Well" check.

If it is established that a care leaver has gone missing and there are concerns about their whereabouts/safety, the Targeted Youth Support Team Manager will follow the 'What If' procedures.

Where there are concerns that a care leaver is involved in exploitation and it is proving difficult to manage the risk locally, TYS teams are to escalate the case to the Transition to Adulthood Panel where the panel will aim to support the worker to affect change/strengthen the risk management plan.