

# Reporting Children & Young People Missing from Care during the Covid-19 Pandemic

## COVID-19

The Metropolitan Police Service currently faces an unprecedented challenge. The public safety measures brought in by the government to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic orders that a significant proportion of the population STAY AT HOME. These measures are as necessary for young people residing in residential care homes as it is for all.

To support policing during this challenging time, it is more important than ever that care provision fulfil their role as corporate parents and act accordingly when a child leaves the home.

This sheet outlines the actions care provision should take prior to reporting a child missing. These instructions apply at all times, but are now of increased necessity and importance during this period of national crisis.

## PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Carers/corporate parents are responsible for the wellbeing of all the children residing within their care. However, the provision are reminded that a child being away from their care home does not necessarily mean they should be reported as missing.

All possible efforts should be made to keep young people within the home during the government lockdown for the safety of all. Any breach of this, however, is not a reason in and of itself to report a child as missing.



## EXPECTED ACTIONS PRIOR TO POLICE INVOLVEMENT

### TICK

- Attempt to contact the young person (repeat)
- Contact all known family members
- Contact all known friends and other relevant persons
- Contact local hospitals
- Check any known Social Media
- Search home and immediate outdoor areas wherever possible
- Check locations known to be frequented
- Oyster Card (if can be viewed online or by a social worker with access)
- Talk to other young people in the home
- Ensure social services risk assessment for the child available and viewed

**The result of all actions completed should be recorded and provided to police if it becomes necessary to report the child as missing.**

Police should not be routinely informed, for example because a child has missed a curfew, although it may be appropriate if the circumstances imply that there is an immediate significant risk and there are concerns about the child's welfare or safety.

To ensure that we respond appropriately to reports of missing it is crucial that prior to making a report to police efforts are undertaken by carers/corporate parents to establish the whereabouts of the child.

The actions shown in red outline some actions that should be undertaken prior to police involvement. This is not an exhaustive list and knowledge held about a specific child should inform additional actions.

**PLEASE DISPLAY THIS NOTICE FOR ALL STAFF WORKING WITHIN YOUR CARE PROVISION**

**YOU SHOULD ONLY REPORT VIA THE ONLINE PARTNER FACILITY**  
[met.police.uk/partners/partner-services](https://met.police.uk/partners/partner-services)

