

## **Guidance for Providers re Missing Children and when to respond**

- Providers should take all reasonable steps with an expectation of following your internal protocols to find out where the child is.

Where the child's whereabouts cannot be ascertained, the provider/carer should report the child missing to police following the child's individual missing protocol which may be agreed at the placement planning meeting or subsequently.

- If the whereabouts of a child is known by carers, the child is NOT missing and should not be reported as missing to the police. Despite this, this does not eliminate risks to the child. Therefore, if carers know where a child is but it is deemed this is not a safe place for the child to be and there are safeguarding concerns, the carer should follow the relevant safeguarding procedures i.e. contact EDS and or Police for assistance via safeguarding. Partners will negotiate response based on risks and impact of safety on such child.
- If reported missing and police have located a missing child and are with such child, police will liaise with the child's carer to negotiate returning the child home. Police will make all conscious efforts to support the child returning home safely and response will be determined on a case by case basis. Please note, police may not always be able to transport the child back to placement.
- Where a missing child is located with no police intervention then providers/ carers should consult with the allocated social worker or EDS for direction on the most appropriate action to achieve safety for the child. Police should be notified when found to undertake their safe and well checks at the soonest opportunity.