

A REPORT OF THE EDUCATION AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL – 12 JANUARY 2016

CHILDREN MISSING FROM HOME AND CARE

EXECUTIVE COMMENTARY

This is another good example of a short scrutiny inquiry working effectively in drawing together the key issues and challenges for agencies in working together to protect vulnerable children and young people who are missing from Home and Care.

We are in year two of a three year improvement plan, and this is a helpful stock take on our work in this area.

I am pleased to report that the Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Board on-line procedure on missing children has recently been updated (in September 2015) to merge guidance on children missing from care, home and education into one procedure.

In addition, on the 9th December, the government launched an all-party parliamentary group on missing children and adults, looking into how children's services, schools and police safeguard children who are deemed 'absent' from home, care or education. The group also intends to examine how the introduction by the police of 'missing' and 'absent' categories in 2012 has affected safeguarding responses for children who runaway. Officers will also be updating the Education and Vulnerable Children O&S in January 2016 about children missing from education.

Lastly, I am pleased the executive decision to sign up to the Runaways' Charter developed by the Children's Society, which sets up clear expectations of what local councils should be putting in place to protect children, is now an additional recommendation in the scrutiny report. As our improvement work continues, this report will be a helpful addition to our work.

Brigid Jones
Cabinet Member Children's Services