



Level 3 Award in Undertaking Independent Missing Return Interviews for Children

Feedback and Evaluation Summary: The Children's Society

The Level 3 Award in 'Undertaking Independent Missing Return Interviews for Children' has been commissioned by The Children's Society to provide a training and assessment-based qualification for Shropshire-based interviewers who are working on a unique project alongside colleagues from West Mercia Police.

Learners successfully completed the rigorous class-based training and assessment process during 2019, and learners were presented with their certificate of qualification and competence by Shropshire Academy and Learning Trust on 21st August 2019. Interviewers are now competency certified and fully qualified in the **NOCN Level 3 Award in Undertaking Independent Missing Return Interviews for Children**.

Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 requires Local Authorities and statutory partners to ensure that their duties are discharged with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Children. Guidance requires that when a child is found, and returned home after running away, they must be offered an Independent Return Interview within 72 hours of their return. The interview should be undertaken by a non-statutory provider.

This NOCN qualification, authored by Shropshire Academy and Learning Trust is nationally accredited and Ofqual regulated, providing reliable and competency-assessed training, in support of the Statutory Guidance for Children Who Run Away or go Missing from Home or Care (2014) which requires that a Return Home Interviews must be delivered by a trained professional.



The Children's Society

The Children's Society provides support to children in Shropshire who go missing from care whilst living away from their home county.

When Children return home from a missing period they are offered a Return Home Interview. This is a one-to-one session with an independent professional aims to understand the concerns which led them to go missing and helping them access additional support that they may need to prevent this from happening again.

Shauna Breen, Service Manager at The Children's Society, said: "Children may go missing for many reason; be it that they feel unhappy, miss their friends and family, or because they are being groomed for sexual or criminal exploitation. Whatever the reason, going missing can put children at real risk of harm and it's absolutely crucial that they get the help they need.

"Return home interviews are really important and this training has helped reinforce and build upon the knowledge of our practitioners as they support children to identify the root causes that are leading to them going missing whilst accessing vital help."

The Learners

Candidates performed to an exceptionally high standard during the training process and the written assessment feedback evidences that learners contributed to a very high standard both verbally and practically during the intensive 3-day training programme.

NOCN assigned verification procedures were rigorously applied as part of the quality assurance and competency-based assessment and marking process and learners demonstrated a thorough understanding of the course content as evidenced within the assessment of the Multi Agency Summary Report produced.

Robust knowledge and evidence was demonstrated with due regard to the required understanding pertaining to legislation and statutory guidance needed to support proactive and successful interviews, alongside the written evidence produced, demonstrating a clear understanding of the



psychological harm and risks that children who run away and go missing face whilst away from the care of safe and supportive adults.

Learner Evaluation and Feedback:

"I have found the Level 3 training invaluable in promoting systems change and advocating on behalf of the rights of the child. It has enabled me as a practitioner to confidently escalate issues raised by children and tailor my skills of engagement in this very unique role, backed up with the knowledge of legislation and statutory guidance." Laura Prinold

"The training has given me the confidence to communicate and effectively challenge agencies and professionals with responsibility for the care of children and further safeguard children whom have been missing and returned home. The framework and guidance provided within the training were beneficial to this unique project, given the sensitivities of working across agency protocols. Carla Hoof

"As a result of the training I have been able to increase engagement and uptake in the provision available for children by not only educating those who support them, but also empowering children to understand their rights to receive the opportunity to speak to an independent person following an episode of being missing from home and by devising a toolkit for engaging young people." Laura Prinold

"This role and project has not been without its challenges, however the training has enabled me to identify, collate, challenge and overcome barriers in an effective and timely manner, increasing the opportunity for children's voices to be heard." Carla Hoof

Shropshire Academy and Learning Trust wishes to thank The Children's Society the learners who attended for their contribution to this article, and to Shauna Breen, Service Manager for The Children's Society, for her commitment to improved practice within the field.



Qualification Entry Requirements

Applicants are required to have the following as a qualification entry requirement:

1. *A minimum of a Level 2 English Qualification*
2. *Minimum Level 2 Safeguarding Qualification or Evidenced Training*
3. *2 years' relevant professional experience in children's health, education or a social care setting*
4. *Current Enhanced DBS (registered on the update service or evidenced via a disclaimer)*
5. *An understanding/awareness of childhood development, adversity, attachment and trauma*

This is a 3-day intensive training course, which follows stringent awarding body and Ofqual requirements. The Qualification and Assessment Specification is available upon request.

Delivery Model

3-days of classroom-based training is allocated to the face to face element of the programme schedule. Pre-course preparation is required and learners **must** achieve all 3 credits from the 2 mandatory components.

The **NOCN Level 3 Award in Undertaking Independent Missing Return Interviews for Children** is a 3 credit qualification with a Total Qualification Time (TQT) of 30 hours, including 21 Guided Learning Hours (GLH).

The assessment for the NOCN Level 3 Award in Undertaking Independent Missing Return Interviews for Children is assessed through the production of an assignment, and three case studies, with associated interview reports. Assessments are completed under assessor led class-based conditions.

The assessment method for this qualification is Pass or Fail. Certification is awarded upon successful moderation of the assessment specification, usually within 8 – 10 weeks of course completion.

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