

Report to: **Corporate Parenting Panel**
Date: **20 July 2007**
Title of Report: **Children Missing from Care during 2006/07**
By: **Director of Children's Services**
Purpose of Report: **To advise the Panel regarding children who have been missing from care**

RECOMMENDATION:

The Panel is recommended to note the number of children who have been missing from their care placements during 2006/07

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 There are no financial implications. The report describes services that are already provided from within the Children's Services Department base budget.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 In 2002 a circular, LAC (2002) 17, was issued requiring that Local Authorities and Police Forces should review their systems with regard to children who are missing. The guidance required that:

- There should be in place multi-agency protocols detailing action to be taken when children in care go missing from their placements.
- That absences from foster and residential homes should be monitored annually.

2.2 Appendix 1 provides details of looked after children who have been missing during 2006/07. The data show details of all children who have absconded and how often they have been missing.

2.3 As can be seen from the spreadsheet, comparatively small numbers of children go missing. The children who do abscond are often the most vulnerable and damaged children, and they often abscond on more than one occasion and from different types of placement.

2.4 It is also apparent that on occasions children abscond from residential care together and can develop a culture of absconding. It is noteworthy that there have been no incidents of children going missing from Rose Cottage and levels of absconding from Lansdowne were low. Levels of absconding from Old Roar have reduced from previous years. Homefield Cottages has a problem associated with some individuals that is being addressed.

MATT DUNKLEY
Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Fiona Johnson, Head of Children's Safeguards, Tel: 01273 481289

Local Members: All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

**ESCC Missing looked after children figures from
1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007**

