# YPS Summary of services

for the purpose of the Youth Risk Panel.

## Young People's Service

The CFSS Young People's Service (YPS) works with young people aged 11–17 who are experiencing risks within the community and wider environments. As a specialist service in extra familial harm, YPS provides targeted intervention across contexts and works closely with the multi-agency Child Exploitation Hub, alongside colleagues from Social Care, Health, and the Police.

YPS may act as the lead professional, completing Family Help Conversation and coordinating a Team Around the Family to help young people make the changes they identify as being in their best interests.

YPS also receives referrals from Social Care and can work in partnership with social workers, offering additional interventions that complement wider plans.
In addition, YPS holds the statutory responsibility for completing Return Home Interviews (RHIs) on behalf of the Trust for all missing children.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) highlights the need for all services to respond to risks outside the family home, in addition to supporting safety within families. YPS supports young people facing a range of extra familial challenges, including criminal or sexual exploitation, serious youth violence, knife harm, gang association, school exclusion or non-attendance, experiences of domestic abuse, substance misuse, financial or housing difficulties, missing episodes, and mental health concerns.

To discuss referrals into the service, professionals can email CFSS@Nctrust.co.uk and request a case discussion.

## Our approach

The Young People's Service works by:

- Creating safety with young people and their families through a contextual safeguarding approach.
- Using best practice and evidence-informed methods, drawing on NCT's relational practice model, Signs of Safety, systemic practice, trauma-informed and restorative approaches.
- Remaining solution-focused and strengths-based in all communication and intervention.
- Building trusted, consistent relationships with young people.
- Being proactive, persistent, and responsive to emerging need.
- Ensuring the voice and lived experience of the young person is central to all decision-making.
- Working collaboratively with partner agencies to strengthen networks around the young person.
- Seeking to understand each young person's experience, circumstances, and aspirations.
- Acting as a strong advocate for young people.

## The Young People's Service – Missing Children Offer

The Missing Children's Team sits within the Young People's Service. A dedicated team support the missing service offer and are specifically in place to support Return Home Interviews (RHIs). RHIs take place shortly after a child or young person returns from a missing episode. They provide a space to understand the young person's perspective on what led to them going missing, what occurred while they were away, and how they are feeling on their return.

Statutory guidance states that all missing children in England must be offered an RHI within 72 hours. These interviews are delivered by a dedicated team within the Young People's Service.

Missing episodes can expose children and young people to significant harm but may also reflect underlying difficulties such as:

- Conflicts or tensions at home, including being told to leave
- Disrupted or strained family relationships
- Experiences of physical or emotional harm, including domestic abuse
- Emotional distress or a need for someone to talk to
- School-based challenges
- Substance use
- Grooming, Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), or Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Placement instability, especially for children in care

RHIs are a crucial opportunity for early intervention. Research shows that RHIs combined with follow-up support reduce repeat missing episodes and contribute to improved outcomes. The YPS Missing practitioners can offer referrals for ongoing support for the young person and their family, including safety planning and practical strategies.

Following each RHI, the practitioner completes a detailed written record focused on the child's voice, professional analysis, actions taken, and recommendations for the lead professional. This is overseen by the Missing Children Coordinator.

Vulnerable Adolescence Panel (VAP) – Wider offer within the Young People's Service.

The Vulnerable Adolescence Panel exists to respond to the increasing risks of child exploitation and extra-familial harm within our communities. Following the completion of a CERAF (Northamptonshire's Child Exploitation Risk Assessment) with a low score, the panel provides an opportunity for multi-agency partners to share information and consider how contextual safeguarding principles can be used to strengthen safety in the places and spaces where young people spend time.

VAP is an information-sharing and consultative forum. Accountability for each case remains with the lead professional or allocated team.

**Aims of the Panel**

The panel seeks to reduce risk and vulnerability for young people who may be affected by any form of exploitation by:

- Offering professional advice and guidance to help mitigate exploitation risks.
- Providing a structured forum for information sharing in line with Working Together 2023.
- Supporting oversight across agencies so that risks are clearly understood and responded to.
- Identifying additional actions, beyond existing plans, to reduce harm.

- Feeding trend data and intelligence into Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and the NSCP to build an accurate picture of extra-familial harm across the county.
- Driving a contextual safeguarding response at both individual and community levels.

**Panel Processes**

- The panel meets fortnightly and is co-chaired by the Police, NCT, YJS, Health, Action for Children, and Ngage.
- Any agency can refer a young person where there are concerns about exploitation.
- If a young person has an allocated social worker, referrals must be submitted by the social worker.
- All referrals must include a CERAF, available via the NSCP website, LiquidLogic, or by emailing **vappanel@nctrust.co.uk**.
- Referrers present their case within a 20-minute discussion slot.
- The referral should be discussed with the young person and family in advance, ensuring their voice is represented.
- Governance for the panel sits with the NSCP Child Exploitation Subgroup