



LLOYD WILLIAMSON  
FOUNDATION

**The**  
**Lloyd Williamson**  
**Schools Foundation**

**Child Missing in**  
**Education Policy**

## Statement of intent

All children are entitled to a full-time education, regardless of their circumstances. Unfortunately, children missing education (CME) risk underachieving, being victims of abuse, and not being in education, employment or training (NEET) in later life.

The school has a legal duty to identify when there are CME and help them back into education. This policy highlights what our school will do to help.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2018) 'Working together to safeguard children'
- DfE (updated 2023) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2020) 'School attendance'
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2016)
- The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005 (as amended in 2018)
- The School Information (England) Regulations 2008 (as amended in 2018)
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended in 2014)

## 2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, a "child missing education" is defined as a child or young person of compulsory school age who is not attending school (either not attending at all, or who is absent without us knowing the reason), not placed in alternative provision by an LA, and who is not receiving a suitable education elsewhere. This definition also includes children who are receiving an education, but one that is not suitable; this could include children who are not receiving full-time education suitable to their needs, e.g. age, ability, aptitude, SEND.

## 3. Why children miss education

There are a number of reasons as to why children miss school, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Failing to be registered at a school at the age of five
- Failing to make a successful transition
- Exclusion
- Mid-year transfer of school
- Families moving into a new area
- Sickness
- Being a young carer

Aside from these reasons, if a child is missing / absent from school, particularly repeatedly, this can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, such as the following:

- Abuse and neglect – including child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE), potentially involving county lines
- So-called 'honour-based' abuse – including risk of FGM or risk of forced marriage
- Mental health issues – such as risk of substance abuse
- Risk of travelling to conflict zones

## 4. Children at particular risks of missing education

As there could be many reasons for a child to be missing from education, the school will make a judgement on a case-by-case basis. The following list indicates pupils who are most at risk of missing education:

- **Pupils at risk of harm or neglect** – where this is suspected, local child protection procedures will be followed; however, if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made immediately to children’s social care (and the police if appropriate). Should there be a reason to suspect a crime has been committed or the child’s safety is at risk, the school will contact the police.
- **Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) families** – when a GRT pupil leaves the school without naming their next destination school, the school will contact the Local Authority. If necessary, the school will consult the Local Authority’s Traveller Education Support Services for advice on the best strategies to ensure minimal disruption to the GRT pupil’s education.
- **Children of service personnel** – the school will contact the Ministry of Defence Children’s Education Advisory Service for advice to ensure continuity of education for these children.
- **Missing children and runaways** – should the school suspect a child has gone missing or run away, an appropriate staff member will consult the DfE for advice on missing children.
- **Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice System** – in this case, LA youth offending teams are responsible for supervising children (aged 8 to 18). Where a young person is registered at the school prior to custody, the school will keep the place open for their return.
- **Children who cease to attend school – either permanently or regularly** – where the reason for a child who has stopped attending a school is not known, the school will investigate the situation initially with the parent and then, if the situation continues to the missing from education officer. Dependent on the concerns or if there are additional concerns the school may complete a MARFF – this needs to be done with the knowledge of the parents.
- **Children of migrant families** – there is an increased risk of a child missing education if they are part of a new migrant family who may not yet have settled into a fixed address, or may have arrived into an area without the local authority becoming aware.

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

### The school

- The school will enter pupils on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed by the school.
- In the event that a pupil fails to attend the school on the agreed or notified date, the school will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the reason for this absence, and will consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.
- The school will aim to hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.
- The school will keep an accurate and up-to-date admissions register by encouraging parents to inform them of any changes.
- The school will monitor pupils’ attendance through a daily register.
- The school will decide on a case by case basis what intervals are best to inform them of pupils who are regularly absent from school, or who have missed ten school days or more without permission.
- Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence, or is absent from the school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the school will decide whether to remove the pupil from the admission register if the school and the local authority have failed to establish the whereabouts of the child after making reasonable enquiries.
- The school will notify the local authority if any pupil is to be deleted from the admission register in the circumstance outlined in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2016).
- Pupils who remain on the school roll are not necessarily missing education, but will be monitored and their attendance will be addressed when it is poor or when there is no reasonable and/or applicable explanation
- The school will arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed-period exclusion. The school will provide information to the local authority regarding

standard transitions, if requested to do so by the local authority.

### **Staff members**

- All staff will be alert to the potential need to implement early help for a pupil who is frequently missing or goes missing from care or home.
- All staff will be aware of the school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.
- Where staff have concerns about pupils relating to CME, staff will use their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated to the DSL or their deputy.

### **The Local Authority**

- Under the Education Act 1996, the local authority has a duty to establish the identities of children in the area who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving education provision otherwise.
- The local authority will provide full-time education for permanently excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed-period exclusion.
- We will bring to the attention of the local authority if we consider attention that a child may not be receiving a suitable education.
- The local authority will issue School Attendance Orders to parents who fail to assure the local authority that their child is receiving a suitable education, and the local authority believes that the child should attend school.
- The local authority will prosecute parents that do not comply with a School Attendance Order.
- The local authority will prosecute or fine parents/carers of school-registered children who fail to ensure their child attends school regularly.
- The local authority will ensure that children identified as not receiving suitable education are returned to full-time education either at the school or elsewhere.
- The local authority will ensure that children who return to full-time education are appropriately supported, taking into account the reasons why they missed education in the first place.
- Pupils with SEN statements, or EHC plans, are able to be home educated. If the statement/EHC plan sets out the provision that the pupil should receive at home, or names a school where the provision will be received, but the parent/carer chooses to home educate the child, the local authority will arrange the provision and ensure that it is suitable to the child's special educational needs.
- The local authority will review this statement annually. The local authority is responsible for liaising and sharing information with other agencies to support children who miss education.
- The local authority is responsible for sharing the fact that a child has a social worker with the school.
- The school and local authority is responsible for referring to the local authority children's social care where there is concern for a child's welfare, as well as the police if there is reason to suspect a crime has been committed.

### **Parents**

- Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children, who are of compulsory school age, are receiving suitable full-time education.
- Parents are responsible for notifying the school in writing where they will be home-schooling their child, in order for the child to be removed from the admissions register.
- Parents will notify the school regarding any absences or changes to the pupil's education arrangements.

## **6. Induction and training**

The safeguarding response to children who are absent or go missing from education will be explained to staff during their induction.

All staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection training (e.g. KCSiE quiz updated September 2023), which will include an update on the various safeguarding concern possibilities that absence could represent, any changes to the early help process and staff members' role in this process.

## 7. Working with others

When a child moves to a different educational setting, the admin team will transfer their pupil file to the new school as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term; this is completed once we know a child is leaving and to which school they are going to. Confirmation of receipt is obtained. Safeguarding concerns are transferred via a secure email once the receiving school have confirmed the address to send it to.

## 8. Safeguarding

For the purpose of this policy, “**reasonable enquiries**” are defined as limited, investigative powers that the school may action to determine a child’s whereabouts and whether they may be in danger. In line with the Children Act 2004, the school will follow appropriate procedures when carrying out reasonable enquiries to determine whether a child may be at risk of harm.

The DSL will record that they have completed these procedures and, if necessary, make a referral to the children’s social care or police.

Where the whereabouts and safety of a child is unknown, the school, in conjunction with the LA, may carry out the following actions:

- Make contact with the parent/carer, relatives and neighbours using known contact details
- Follow local information sharing arrangements, and making enquiries via other local databases and agencies where possible
- Check with the local authority or school from which the pupil moved originally
- Check with the local authority where the pupil lives, if this is different to where the school is located
- Check with the Ministry of Defence Children’s Education Advisory Service in the case of children of Service Personnel
- Conduct home visits as necessary, via an appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessments, and making enquiries with neighbours or relatives, if appropriate

NB. This list is not exhaustive – the school and local authority will use their judgement towards what reasonable enquiries are appropriate, once all the facts of the case have been considered.

## 9. Admissions register

The school will ensure that the admissions register is kept up-to-date at all times, and will encourage parents/carers to notify the school of any changes as they occur, such as via email or newsletters.

Pupils will be recorded on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed by the school, or the day that the school has been notified, as the date that the pupil will attend the school.

Where a parent/carer notifies the school that a pupil will live at another address, the school will record the following information on the admissions register:

- The full name of the parent/carer with whom the pupil will live
- The new address
- The date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address
- Where a parent notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school, or will be attending a different school in future, the school will record the following information on the admissions register:
  - The name of the new school
  - The date when the pupil first attended, or is due to attend that school

Parents are able to elect to educate their children at home, and will subsequently withdraw them from school. This can happen at any time, unless the pupil is subject to a School Attendance Order. If a

parent notifies the school, the pupil will be deleted from our admission register and the local authority informed. We will do all we can to dissuade parents from home-educating.

## **10. Removing a pupil from the admissions register**

The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who will be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system, e.g. home-schooled.
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither they nor their parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order, and the school does not reasonably believe they will be returning at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded
- Have died
- Are registered at more than one school, but have failed to attend the school and the proprietor of any other schools concerned have consented to the deletion.
- Have been granted authorised leave but have failed to attend school within ten school days after the period of authorised absence ended, and:
  - There is reason to believe the pupil is not unable to attend school.
  - The local authority and school are unable to determine the pupil's whereabouts after making joint reasonable enquiries.
- Have been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than twenty school days, and:
  - The absence was not authorised.
  - There is reason to believe the pupil is not unable to attend school.
  - The local authority and school is unable to determine the pupil's whereabouts after making joint reasonable enquiries.
- Will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets, and the relevant person has indicated the pupil will not attend the school, or, the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for sixth form.
- The pupil was admitted to receive nursery education and since completion has not transferred to Reception, or a higher class, at the school.

The school will notify the local authority that a pupil is to be removed from the admissions register as soon as any of the above criteria are met, and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is actually removed:

- If a pupil's name is to be removed from the admissions register, the school will provide the local authority with the following information:
  - The full name of the pupil
  - The full name and address of any parent/carer with whom the pupil lives
  - At least one telephone number of the parent/carer with whom the pupil lives
  - The full name and address of the parent/carer who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable
  - The name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date, if applicable
  - The grounds for removal from the admissions register under Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended), as outlined in section 10 of this policy.

## **11. Monitoring and review**

This policy is an ongoing document and needs to be changed in response to updates, at a minimum it should be reviewed at least every two years by the headteacher.

**September 2023**

**Next Review due September 2024**

**Lucy Meyer**  
***Co-Principal***