

Upton Snodsbury CofE Primary School



Children Missing Education Policy

Aims

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 Local Authority (LA) has a legal duty to:

- Identify any pupil who is of compulsory school age and not receiving education
- Get these pupils back into education

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, 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.

Why children miss education

There are a number of reasons as to why children miss school, including 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

Aside from these reasons, if a child is missing 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 sexual abuse or exploitation and criminal exploitation

Mental health issues – such as risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of FGM or risk of forced marriage

Children at particular risks of missing education

As there could be many reasons for a child to be missing from education, the LA 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). The LA officers responsible for CME will check a referral has been made, and will contact children’s social care if this is not the case. Should there be a reason to suspect a crime has been committed or the child’s safety is at risk, the LA 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 LA. If necessary, the school will consult the LA 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/runaways – should the school suspect a child has gone missing/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 – where the reason for a child who has stopped attending a school is not known, the LA will investigate the situation.

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 LA area without the authority becoming aware.

Where a pupil needs a social worker, this will inform our decisions about responding to unauthorised absence or to the pupil missing education where there are known safeguarding risks (paragraph 176, KCSIE 2025).

Monitoring attendance through a daily register

School will:

- Enter pupils on the register every day that the school has agreed or been notified that the pupil will attend
- Address poor or irregular attendance
- Refer poor attendance to the LA
- Investigate any unexplained absences as part of our wider safeguarding duties
- Keep our admission register accurate and up to date

We will inform the LA of the details of pupils who:

- Fail to attend regularly
- Have missed 10 schools days or more without permission (or because of illness, unavoidable cause, a religious holiday or the LA's failure to make the required travel arrangements)

Keeping our admission register accurate and up to date

- We will Enter new pupils onto our register as soon as they start
- If we're told that a new pupil will be joining our school, but the pupil doesn't attend on the agreed date, we will try to establish the child's whereabouts and consider alerting the LA.
- If a pupil starts at our school and the previous school is unknown, we will let your LA know so they can search for the previous school in the DfE's school to school (S2S) system.

Communicating any changes to their information

We will ask for updates via the newsletter at least once a year.

We will hold **more than 1** emergency contact number for each pupil, to help us get in touch with an adult if we have any concerns.

As soon as a parent or carer tells us about a **change of address** for a pupil, we will record the following in our admission register:

- The full name of the parent/carer with whom the pupil will live
- The new address
- The date from when it's expected the pupil will live at this address

Where a pupil is registered at **another school** or will be attending one in future, we will record in our register:

- The name of the new school
- The date when the pupil has started, or is due to start, attending their new school
- Once registers at a new school, we will send a common transfer file (CTF) to the pupil's new school.
- We will follow up the move to another school with a phonecall.

Non-standard transitions

If a pupil's name is added to our school roll, **at a non-standard transition point** (for example, joining mid-year or leaving before our school's final year), we **will**:

- Notify our LA **within 5 days**
- Provide our LA with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil

If a pupil's name is to be removed from the school roll

We **will** inform our LA of all deletions from your admission register when a pupil is taken off roll (this doesn't apply where a pupil's name is deleted after they've completed the final year at our school).

If at a non-standard transition point, we will tell your LA immediately and provide them the following information:

- The pupil's full name
- The full name and address of any parent/carer with whom the pupil lives
- At least 1 phone number for the parent/carer the pupil lives with
- The full name and address of the parent/carer 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 destination school and the pupil's expected start date (if applicable)
- The ground in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the register

Timing is important: we will notify the LA as soon as the ground for removal is met, and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

We will make 'reasonable enquiries' for pupils who aren't attending

Where a pupil:

- Has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, **or**
- Has been absent without authorisation for 20 consecutive days

We can remove them from our register **only when** we've failed to establish their whereabouts, after making 'reasonable enquiries', **jointly with your LA**, to locate them. This only applies if we don't have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or another unavoidable cause.

We will make 'Reasonable enquiries' when the whereabouts of a child are unclear or unknown, might include completing and recording **1 or more** of the following:

- Contacting parents/carers, relatives and neighbours using known contact details
- Checking local databases within the LA, or the DfE's Key to Success or school2school systems
- Following local information sharing arrangements, making enquiries to:
 - Other local databases and agencies
 - Agencies known to be involved with the family
- Checking with UK Visas and Immigration and/or the Border Force
- Checking with the LA and school from which our pupil moved from originally, or any past LAs or schools that have educated our pupil
- Checking with the LA where our pupil lives, if it's different from the one where your school is
- In the case of children of service personnel, checking with the Ministry of Defence Children's Education Advisory Service
- Conducting a home visit, following our own policies and risk assessment procedures. If appropriate, making enquiries with neighbours and relatives

If we still aren't able to locate a pupil (and neither can our LA), we can remove them from our register (as set out above).