



## Children Missing Education Policy

<b>Author</b>	Mike Rickner
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<b>Approving Body</b>	ELT
<b>Regulatory References</b>	Safeguarding & CP Policy 2023
	Child on Child Abuse Policy
	KCSIE 2023
<b>Next Review</b>	June 2024

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## **CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION POLICY**

A child missing education from school due to repeated or unexplained absence, or by leaving the school unexpectedly is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, or where a family may be in need of additional support. The School has drawn up this policy to deal with children who miss schooling in these circumstances, particularly on repeat occasions, and for those children who leave school without clear indications of where they will be continuing their education.

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of Stowe's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

It is important to distinguish a pupil missing education and being absent:

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines.

It is important the school or college's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community. Further information and support, includes:

- Guidance on school attendance 'Working together to improve school attendance' including information on how schools should work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.
- Information regarding schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance: Children Missing Education.
- Further information for colleges providing education for a child of compulsory school age can be found in: Full-time-Enrolment of 14 to 16 year olds in Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges.
- General information and advice for schools and colleges can be found in the Government's Missing Children and Adults Strategy.

## CONTEXT

This policy should be read alongside the School's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** of which it is an integral part. The policy has regard to the DfE Guidance: **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023** and [Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities 2016](#)

## POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The school will carry out daily registrations in class and absences will be dealt with in accordance with the School's **Missing Child Procedure and Policy**.

This policy covers those instances where:

- There is a repeated pattern of absence;
- The reason for absence is unclear or unexplained;
- A member of staff has concerns about the nature of a pupil's absence;

In these instances, the School's DSL or DDSL should be informed.

The School's DSL will then follow the procedure detailed in the School's **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** and **Missing Pupil Policy**.

When a pupil leaves the School, the School will make contact with the receiving school and the local authority to ensure the child is registered at the school and has started to attend. If a Safeguarding file has been created, the DSL will then forward the appropriate records to the receiving school, in line with the BSCP's guidance: ***Keeping records of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns; January 2014***.

When a pupil leaves our school without clear indication of a receiving school, the school will contact the Bucks County Council Children Missing Education Team on 01296 383098 or email [childrenmissingeducation@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:childrenmissingeducation@buckscc.gov.uk) and the Local Authority of the pupil's home address to advise them of the situation and to start their tracking procedures.

When a pupil missing from education is a Looked After Child the School and DSL will work swiftly with the local authority who has parental responsibility for the Looked After Child.

## Children Missing from Education (possible) Reasons:

- Clear sign that early help is required
- Involvement in CCE
- Involvement in CSE
- Involvement in County Lines
- Involvement in Radicalisation
- They are a LAC.

**Further Information**

- [Children missing education](#) - DfE statutory guidance
- [Child missing from home or care](#) - DfE statutory guidance
- [Children and adults missing strategy](#) - Home Office strategy

**Monitoring and review**

This policy is monitored by the Governors of the School and will be reviewed annually or in the light of changes to legislation.