

Missing in Education Policy

(Extracted from Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy)

This Policy applies to the whole school and is published to staff, pupils and parents

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The School acknowledges that children who are absent from education, particularly repeat occasions and/ or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign that they may be at increased risk, or that their absence may be indicative of a range of safeguarding issues including abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, CSE and CCE. It can also be a sign of CCE including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of FGM, so-called ‘honour-based’ abuse or risk of forced marriage. It is therefore important that the School’s response to such absence supports identifying any such abuse if it exists and helps prevent the risk of pupils going missing from education in the future. Children with a social worker may be particularly at risk due to their increased vulnerability.

Equally, no abuse as such may be involved, but numerous or prolonged absences will have a detrimental effect on the education of the child, and it may be that the child and family would benefit from early help.

It is recognised that Form Tutors and the teaching staff are in the best position to raise initial concerns about such absences. The School will therefore ensure that:

- Form Tutors maintain appropriate records of attendance as a matter of statutory duty.
- contact is made by a member of staff from the Senior or Junior School Office on the first day of the absence when no contact has been initiated from home and the School’s a.m. registration has been completed.
- concerns about absence are flagged with the DSL by the Form Tutor who will also raise them with parents when absence is either prolonged or a series of shorter, sporadic periods over a period of several weeks in order that reasons for such absences can be established, and, if required, appropriate support strategies put in place.
- where appropriate, concerns will be discussed with the Child Missing from Education contacts (For pupils resident in England: Dawn Westerby 01670 622800; for pupils resident in Scotland: Quality Improvement Officer 01835 884000) and their advice sought. The School will report a pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent from school without the School’s permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more without adequate reason.

- the local authority is notified when a pupil's name is about to be removed from the school admission register and also when a pupil's name is about to be added to the School register, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) in order to assist it in
 - fulfilling its duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing from education; and
 - follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse, neglect or radicalisation.
 - complete and submit the local authority's Child Missing Education return at the end of each calendar month during the School year.

Where reasonably possible, the School holds more than one emergency contact number for each pupil to provide the School with additional options to make contact with a responsible adult, particularly when a child missing from education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

When working with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns the School will have regard to the non-statutory DfE guidance *'Working together to improve school attendance'* preserve records about allegations