



CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

This policy is applicable to all staff and parents of children within the school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

This document is available in written format upon request and a copy can also be located on the school's website.

The Children Missing Education Policy will have regard and adhere to the following statutory guidance:

- Children Missing Education – statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (Sept 2025);
- Working Together to improve School Attendance: statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (August 2024);
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2004;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Sept 2025;
- Education Act 1996;
- The school's Attendance Policy (Sept 2025)

INTRODUCTION

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. We recognise that children missing education can be an indicator of abuse or neglect and must be responded to promptly.

It is recognised that one of the signs of children being at risk of or being harmed is when the child is absent from school without explanation, particularly on a regular basis. The school works with parents to ensure that it is able to account for every child who is absent from school. Parents are asked to telephone the school on the first and every successive day of illness. In exceptional circumstances, the Head may authorise absence from school during term-time and only where the absence will have an educational value.

DEFINITION OF CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise (e.g. home education, alternative provision, etc.).

This includes children who:

- Fail to start school without a known reason.
- Are removed from the school roll without clear education destination.
- Are absent from school for extended periods without explanation.

Prolonged Absence: A prolonged absence is defined as any period exceeding 10 consecutive school days without explanation, or a repeated pattern of sporadic absence that raises welfare concerns.



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WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF A CHILD IS ABSENT FROM EDUCATION:

Children who are absent from education, particularly persistently, can be a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect and child sexual and/or child criminal exploitation, particularly county lines. It is therefore important that the School's response to such absence supports identifying such abuse and helps prevent the risk of them going missing in the future.

The School's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education are:

- When a child is not in school without an explanation, then the school will contact parents for an explanation.
- The school will follow up in a timely manner.
- The school will hold a minimum of two emergency contacts for each child.
- Where a child is absent from school and contact cannot be made with parents, then the Head or the DSL will contact Milton Keynes Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for further advice.
- Failure to report a child who is absent from education on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods or where the child is absent without authorisation for a continuous period of 10 school days or more would be non-compliance with the duty to have regard to KCSIE (September 2025).

CHILDREN WHO ARE ABSENT FROM SCHOOL:

A child who is absent from School for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, child sexual and 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 FGM, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage.

Staff must follow the School's procedures for dealing with children who are absent, particularly persistent offenders.

All unexplained absences will be followed up in accordance with this policy.

The School shall inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points in accordance with the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended). This will assist the local authority to:

- a) fulfil its duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are absent from education; and
- b) 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.

School attendance registers are carefully monitored to identify any trends. The School will inform the local authority (and the local authority where the child is normally resident) of any pupil who fails to attend school



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regularly, or has been absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the School and the local authority.

Action should be taken in accordance with this policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare. The School's safeguarding and child protection policy supports identification of abuse and provides preventative measures against the risk of the child being absent from school in the future.

This applies when issues are first emerging as well as where children are already known to the local authority children's social care and need a social worker.

DATA PROTECTION AND RECORD KEEPING

- All attendance records and contact attempts are logged securely
- Concerns, referrals, and outcomes are recorded on CPOMS
- Information is shared with the Local Authority and other professionals as required under safeguarding duties.

The Children Missing Education Policy was reviewed in September 2025 and will be reviewed on or before September 2026.