Orchard Community Primary School

Children Missing From Education Policy

This policy was approved by the Governing Body of Orchard Primary School at their meeting on...........................

Signed....................................... Chair of Governors

Version	Date	Author	Reason for Change
0.1	3/2021	FS based on LCC 2016 policy and LTS checklist	New Policy

Review Frequency	Next Review Date
Every 3 years	3/2024

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION – Policy & Procedures Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION

From 2007 there is a statutory duty on all local authorities in England and Wales to have systems and procedures in place to monitor Children Missing Education (*DCSF Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities in England to Identify Children Not Receiving Education – February 2007*).

A key aspect is about encouraging relevant agencies to work together to design and deliver integrated services. The new duty to identify children who are not receiving a suitable education should be a key part of these arrangements.

Statutory Guidance defines 'suitable education' as follows:

….. this means efficient full-time education suitable to a child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have.

2.0 Duty to Identify Children Missing Education

The duty applies in relation to children / young people of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, and who are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at school (for example, at home, privately, or in alternative provision).

The duty does not apply in relation to children / young people who are registered at a school who are not attending regularly. The new duty complements and reinforces duties that already exist for schools to monitor attendance.

The duty does not apply to children / young people who are being educated at home. Monitoring arrangements already exist for children being educated at home.

2.1 Local authorities are responsible for

Local authorities are responsible for meeting the new requirements under section 436A (inserted before section 437 in Chapter 2, Part 6 of the Education Act 1996.) They also need to put in place arrangements for joint working and appropriate information sharing with other Local Authorities and relevant partner agencies which come into contact with families and children. The new duty should strengthen and compliment existing duties under the Children Act 2004.

Relevant partner agencies include:

- All Schools and alternative providers
- Children's Social Care
- Adult Social Care
- Health
- Police
- Youth Offending
- Housing

Other key partner agencies include:

- Inland Revenue
- Prospects
- Youth Services (Statutory & Voluntary)
- UK Border Agency
- Voluntary & Community Organisations

3.0 IMPLEMENTING THE DUTY

The purpose of the duty is to ensure that children missing from education are identified quickly and that effective tracking systems are put in place to enable effective action to be taken to provide them with suitable education.

The key processes for tracking children missing education are:

- receive information about a child / young person
- check if place of education is already known
- log / record details
- locate and contact family
- conduct a home visit, if appropriate
- determine the child / young person's needs – if appropriate
- identify & access available provision & places
- monitor attendance
- track child / young person

4.0 WHY CHILDREN GO MISSING FROM EDUCATION?

Children/young people fall out of education in a number of ways:

- Fail to start appropriate provision and hence never enter the system;
- Cease to attend, due to 'illegal' exclusion or withdrawal; or
- Fail to complete a transition between providers (e.g. being unable to find a suitable school place after moving to a new local authority area, or after leaving a custodial establishment)

Some children/young people who experience certain life events could be more at risk of not receiving education. These include children and young people who:

- have committed offences
- live in women's refuges
- from homeless families, perhaps living in temporary accommodation, house of multiple occupancy or Bed and Breakfast
- Young runaways
- with long term medical or emotional problems
- affected by substance misuse
- who are unaccompanied asylum seekers
- who are from refugee and asylum seeking families
- are in new immigrant families, who are not yet established in the UK and may not have fixed addresses
- have been trafficked to, or within the UK
    - are in public care
    - are privately fostered
- are Young carers
- are Teenage mothers, and
- are permanently excluded from school, particularly those excluded illegally, e.g. for problematic behaviour or offending.

4.1 Other vulnerable groups include:

Service children   They are likely to experience high mobility both in and outside the UK.

Traveller children   At times the high mobility of these children means they can be at risk of going missing from education.

Excluded pupils   Due to the new regulations made under the Education & Inspection Act 2006 education has to be provided for pupils from the sixth day. Some pupils may be unofficially excluded which is illegal and this will need to be challenged by the Local Authority.

There are some circumstances when a registered pupil of statutory school age is absent without explanation. Most cases are relatively minor whereby a child / young person returns home quickly or is not believed to be in any serious danger.

However there are more serious cases when a child / young person may become a victim of crime, such as being abducted. Schools should contact the parents on the first day of absence without explanation (First Day Contact.)

5.0 HOW AND WHEN TO CONSIDER POLICE INVOLVEMENT?
There may be some occasions when a child/young person not receiving education may have been a victim of a crime.

If the answer to any of the following questions is YES then a referral to the Police should be made.

Have there been suspicions in the past concerning this child / young person & family which together with the sudden disappearance are worrying?

Have there been any past concerns about the child / young person associating with significantly older young people or adults?

Was there a significant incident prior to the child / young person's unexplained absence?

Is there a good reason to believe that the child / young person's absence may be the result of being the victim of a crime?

For example:

- *Is this very sudden & unexpected behaviour?*
- *Has the child / young person gone missing with their family?*
- *Has the child / young person gone missing without their family? Is there any health, religious or cultural reason to believe that the child / young person is at risk of harm?*

6.0 HOW AND WHEN TO CONSIDER SOCIAL CARE INVOLVEMENT?
If the answer to any of the following questions is YES then liaison and/or a further referral to Children's Social Care (Access Team) should be made.

1. Is the child the subject of a child protection plan (on the child protection register)?

2. Is the child in the care of the local authority?

3. Is there social care involvement?

7.0   REDUCING THE RISK OF CHILDREN NOT RECEIVING EDUCATION
There are a range of systems, processes and procedures currently used by local authorities to reduce the risk that children / young people fall out of the education system and go missing. Existing good practice broadly falls into the following categories where the Local Authority introduces measures to:

1. Reduce the likelihood that children / young people fall out of the education system, such as audits of the rolls and registers of schools;

2. Identify and locate children / young people who are not receiving education, such as via truancy sweeps and the provision of named points of contact to receive notification of children from other agencies, and

3. Re-engage the children / young people with appropriate educational provision, for example via multi-agency panels to broker admissions.

8.0 CHILDREN WHO DO NOT HAVE AN EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT

8.1 Identification

Children/young people who are not receiving an education are identified in one of two ways:

i. Notification from an individual and/or agency

ii. Reports from the pupil database, identifying children known to the Local Authority without a school place

8.2 Notification Route

Local authorities are required to have a named individual responsible for receiving details of children found missing from education and for brokering support for them through the most appropriate agencies.

The named person for Leicestershire Local Authority is:

JoAnne Rees
Pupil Services Manager
Leicestershire County Council
Room 100b
County Hall
Glenfield
Leicester LE3 8RF

0116 3052071
07966 111081

E-mail cme@leics.gov.uk

Stakeholders and partner agencies are made aware of how to contact the named person if they become aware that a child/young person may be missing from education.

8.3 Responsibility of the CME Team

The named officer has responsibility for:

• Receiving notifications of an individual child/young person missing from education

• Receiving & producing reports from the Local Authority's database giving details of children of statutory school age, living in Leicestershire, who do not have a school place

• Establishing why a child/young person (identified by notification and reporting process) does not have an educational placement

• Acting as lead professional to ensure that the child / young person is able to re-engage with education

• Conducting home visits as appropriate

- Referring the child/young person to relevant services or agencies as appropriate

- Arranging multi-agency meetings as necessary

- Maintaining a central record of children/young people to enable effective monitor/tracking to take place

The record is saved monthly to provide ongoing access to statistical information.

9.0 MONITORING AND DEVELOPMENT
The Departmental Management Team receives regular reports regarding CME statistics via quarterly reporting and as part of the wider Pupils Missing out on Education work.

In addition, Leicestershire CME Team chairs the Midlands Regional CME Consortium Meetings, which are held termly.

10.0 COMPLAINTS
Should you have concerns or complaints on any aspect of the procedure outlined above, you should contact pupil services in the first instance.

If you are still unhappy, please contact:

Pupil Services Manager
School Admissions & Pupil Services
County Hall
Glenfield
Leicestershire
LE3 8RF
0116 3052071

Appendix A

Referral Checklist for Children Missing out on Education (CME)

Leicestershire County Council

Name of Pupil (s)		Address *(Last Known)*	
AKA		Parents'/Carers' Names	
Date of Birth		Telephone No.	
Gender		Email	
Ethnicity		School/College	
SEN & Disability			
Child in Care?		Date Last Attended	
Any Additional Information *(E.G. additional addresses, information surrounding SEN/Care etc)*			

Action to be Taken by Referrer

Action	Outcome *(Include date completed)*
Check possible whereabouts with staff, siblings, friends & other pupils	
Contact any known extended family and/or emergency contact numbers	
Complete a visit to last known address *(Check visible signs of property being occupied, checks with neighbours etc)* Please include any additional & relevant information about the child or family *(E.g known agencies with involvement & names of contacts)*	

Please complete the table below. Indicate as appropriate and mark whether the indicators are current or historic

No	Vulnerabilities, Warning Signs & Risk Indicators (for the child and/or family)	Yes or No?	Current / Historic (C/H?)
1	History of Local Authority Care (LAC)		
2	Goes Missing from Home/Care		
3	Exclusion and/or unexplained absences from school *(or not engaged in education, employment or training)*		
4	Social and/or Learning difficulties		
5	Low self-esteem / Self-harm requiring medical treatment / Eating Disorders / Emotional Health Issues *(Including anxiety related issues, suicidal thoughts)*		
6	History of Being Bullied or Being a Bully		
7	Drug and/or Alcohol Misuse *(or a history of)*		
8	Involvement in Criminal Activities *(Possible offending patterns in the family)*		
9	At Risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) *(known or suspected)*		
10	Whereabouts Unknown (or unclear) - whether day or night		
11	Displaying Inappropriate Sexualised Behaviours		
12	Aggressive Behaviour Towards Others *(sometimes leading to fixed term exclusions)*		
13	Breakdown of Living and/or Family Relationships *(sometimes leading to staying out overnight)*		
14	Gang Member or Association		
15	History of abuse/neglect		
16	History of domestic abuse/violence		
17	History of mental health difficulties		
18	History of sexual, physical and/or emotional abuse		
19	Isolated from peers/social networks *(not mixing with their usual friends)*		
20	Evidence of Poverty and/or Deprivation		

Based on the above indicators, if there are any safeguarding concerns or worries, have you considered a referral to Social Care? Yes/No

If so, have you gained consent from parents?   Yes/No

Referrer Assessment

(The Vulnerabilities, Warning Signs & Risk Indicators above should help inform your professional judgement when completing the final section of this referral form)

What do you think is working well? *Include protective factors:* • *People, situations & actions that contribute to the wellbeing of the child & to plans about how they could be made safe* • *Actions already being taken to make sure the child is safe*	
What are you worried about? *Include risk factors, whether they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.* • *Harm – actual hurt, injury or abuse (likely) caused by adults in the past or present* • *Risk taking behaviour by the child*	
Professional Judgment *Please use your professional judgement to reflect upon the indicators you have ticked above and consider the health, welfare and safety of the child in question*	
What do you think needs to happen next? *This is the initial plan and should include what outcomes you are hoping are achieved and by when*	

Referrer's Details			
Name		Position/Title	
Contact Details		School/College or Agency	
Signature		Date Completed	

Please password protect the completed form and email to cme@leics.gov.uk

Children Missing Education: Checklist for schools

It is always concerning when a child does not attend school and the reasons are not clear.

It has been agreed within Leicestershire that schools should notify the local authority if a pupil has been absent, without the permission of the school, for a continuous period of 10 days or more, or before if there are concerns around the safety or known risks to the child.

To support referrals of this nature we would like to ensure that the schools have completed the following check prior to sending the referral to the Inclusion Service or Court Team.

Unknown absence over 10 days - unable to make contact with the family

1.   The school will need to make every effort to contact the parent/carer

•Have you have thoroughly exhausted every means of contacting the child remotely? o Emailed the family/young person and checked school email accounts o Phone calls – all numbers including extended family o Text to request contact o Is the child engaging/contactable through the school's portal/website and where possible and able check social media sites that you are aware the child might access?

•Have you visited the child's address, and does it look as through the family are still living at the address?

•Where other known siblings attend other schools, check to see if the other school are having contact with the family.

•Is there a social worker or SEN officer involved? Contact them directly to see if they have had any involvement with the child

•Where other services (health etc) are known to be involved check with them to see if they have had contact with the family.

•If all of the above has been tried, have you text the family to say that 'contact is urgently required, and the school will need to escalate the concern to Social Services or if advised, the police if there is no response to the text'?

2.If you have safeguarding concerns, follow the school's safeguarding procedures and outline that all of the actions above have been completed

3.Where you are not able to locate their whereabouts following the above attempts and the school have exhausted every option to try to locate the child, then the child is a missing person and as such should be reported to social care in the first instance to risk assess their vulnerability and advise of any further actions that will be taken.

4.School should complete a CME referral to the Inclusion Team when the child's attendance cannot be confirmed after 10 days.   The safe and wellbeing checks will remain the responsibility of the school and you should continue to try to do this at regular intervals in case the child/family returns to the property.

5.The Inclusion Service will make contact with the school to gain any further advice and let you know what steps will be taken next.

Unauthorised absence over 10 days: contact with the family has been made but the child is not attending

Although the Inclusion Service will monitor attendance, the initial responsibility for attendance will be with the school. The Inclusion Service can offer advice and support when the following steps have been taken:

The Education Welfare Officer or alternative support that is employed by the school has to complete a visit to the child at the family home to ascertain why the child has not attended and to look at potential measures that can be put in place to support the child's return. This may include:

Anxiety based influences

- Reassuring the child/family around the aspects they are concerned about considering safety planning with the child/family to enable safe peers/adults/places should the child become anxious during the school day.

- Allowing the child to visit when the school is quite (before or after school so they can see what it looks and feels like)?

- Offer a transitional time table to support the child's return and has this been discussed and agreed with the parents?

- Complete risk assessments if it is specific COVID related and are they putting measures in place to help the child's needs/concerns or concerns of the family?

- Make clear to the parents the government guidance around social distancing and re-engaging back in to school and offered re-assurance around this?

- Reassurance around hands, face, space

- Utilising specific PPE/training and fit testing where needed – such as AGPs for clinical procedures

- Reassuring where the child will be sitting

- Reaffirming government advice

- Looking at the routine of the child as the come home – washing hands/using hand sanitiser changing clothes on their return etc

- Are there risks around safeguarding in the home? If so are social care aware? Are their times during the day that the child can speak the person they may be worried about? Usual practices still apply.

- Has the child accessed any therapeutic support around the anxiety – through CAMHS, Wellbeing Service, other that has been commissioned directly by the school using the AWPU? Has the school received medical evidence that the child is too ill to attend school? If yes refer to the Inclusion Service for Medical Needs advice/support.

- Have other services been involved where needed, such as Autism Outreach and have referrals been made?

- Has the school been providing education at home? Are they still providing education and if so is the child engaging in this, if not then it could be more than just anxiety and needs to be looked at in the wider context of CME.

Non-Anxiety Based influences

- Is the child at home or are they elsewhere such as living with other family members etc where they are unable to attend school due to distance? If elsewhere, what are the barriers to them coming back home so that they can attend school and are the necessary services in place if required?

- How long does the families aim to be away?

- If its due to legislation around Covid such as quarantine/travel ban arrangements, then can the child learn remotely?

- If the child is part of a travelling family, are the traveller education team involved and able to offer support? or has the family moved away to work and should be coded as T? If so have the school provided work packs to be completed whilst they are travelling, or will the child be duel registered?

- If it due to custody/LAC status how long is this likely to be for and can learning arrangements be put in place in the interim? i.e. duel registration/distance learning and are services involved where required such as virtual school?

- Has the school any concerns over the behaviours that the child has been displaying prior to their non-attendance where safeguarding/CSE/CCE risks may need to be considered? Are social care/wellbeing service involved? If yes what are they doing to support and if no, do they need to be?

- Have you approached the Inclusion Forums for advice where behaviour support may be needed?

  If the parents are supportive of school and are trying everything to support the child re-engage and the school has made every attempt to re-engage the child back in to school but this has been unsuccessful, complete a referral to the Inclusion Service for additional support by submitting the referral for inclusionpupilservice@leics.gov.uk using Egress secure email, or the AnyComms+ system.

  If the parents appear to have not engage with the support that the school has tried to offer/put in place contact the court team for further advice.