

Date	Minute number	Amendment	signed



Policy Statement for children missing in Education

Children and young people with poor school attendance are often the most vulnerable and more likely to go onto becoming missing from education and missing.

A joint protocol between Derbyshire Social Care and the Derbyshire Police exists to ensure more robust information sharing, recording and follow up between agencies where children are reported as missing or as a runaway.

Going missing can for example be an indicator of neglect, having carer responsibilities, and in an older child can be an indicator of undertaking risky activity in the community and an indicator of child sexual exploitation.

At St Oswald's we are robust in identifying quickly who their children and young people are who go missing from their School or educational setting. A school or educational setting needs to think about trends and patterns of missing in a child or young person that may indicate potential risk and harm and use the systems we have in place to help

MOVING/TRANSFERRING SCHOOLS

It is important that parents keep the Headteacher informed when they are considering changing schools, as we have a duty to inform the Authority of any child that we believe has left our school and has not provided forwarding information on their destination and education provision.

If we are unable to establish your child's new school, we would have to refer them as a missing child to Education Welfare Services. As a result, your child's name may be kept on a missing register and efforts will be made to trace them. It is also important to know about a new school so that we can send on your child's records.

At the point when you have decided to change school, please ask the school office for a Pupil Exit Form.

If you are concerned that the details of your destination should not be shared with anyone but the Headteacher, please discuss this with him/her. S/he will be able to ensure that access to your new address details is restricted appropriately.

At St Oswald's we follow the Statutory guidance from the Government ;

Children missing education Statutory guidance for local authorities November 2013

Policy Statement;

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children missing education (CME) are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of abuse, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later on in life. St Oswald's has robust procedures to ensure any child who moves schools are followed and tracked. The named person for children missing in education is Mrs R. Wood and the designated named person is Mrs D Mansfield.

Parents' responsibilities

Parents have a duty⁴ to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are receiving efficient full-time education. Some parents may elect to educate their children at home and may withdraw them from school at any time to do so, unless they are subject to a School Attendance Order.

Where a parent notifies the school in writing of their intention to home educate, the school must delete the child from its admission register and then inform the local authority. (see Appendix A)

Children with special educational needs EHC Plan can be home educated. Where the statement sets out special educational provision that the child should receive at home, the local authority is under a duty to arrange that provision. Where the statement names a school as the place where the child should receive his or her education but the parent chooses to home educate their child, the local authority must assure itself that the provision being made by the parent is suitable to the child's special educational needs. In such case the local authority must review the statement annually.

Our Duty

It is our duty to monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register. Schools should agree with their local authority the intervals in which they will inform local authorities of the details of pupils who are regularly absent from school or have missed 10 school days or more without permission. Schools must also notify the authority if a pupil is to be deleted from the admission register in certain circumstances. Pupils who remain on a school roll are not necessarily missing education but schools should monitor attendance and address it when it is poor. It is also important that pupils' irregular attendance is referred to the authority. (Please see Attendance Policy)

Schools also have safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils⁸.

Schools must also arrange full-time education for excluded pupils. This information can be found in the [school attendance and exclusions advice](#).

Children at particular risk of missing education: There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education so it is vital that local authorities make judgement on a case by case basis. The list (is not exhaustive) below presents some of the circumstances that schools should consider when establishing their CME practices and policies:

1. Pupils at risk of harm/neglect - Children may be missing from education because they are suffering from abuse or neglect. Where this is suspected schools should follow local child protection procedures. Local authority officers responsible for CME should check that a referral has been made and, if not, they should alert children's social care. If there is reason to suspect that a crime has been committed or the child's safety is at risk, the police should also be involved. The Department's statutory guidance

2. Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Families – Research¹⁷ has shown that many children from these families can become disengaged from education. It is therefore vital that schools inform the LA when a GRT pupil leaves the school without identifying a new destination school, particularly in the transition from primary to secondary so that they can attempt to facilitate continuity of the child's education. Although many are settled, some GRT families move regularly and their children can be at increased risk of missing education. Local authority Traveller Education Support Services (TESS), where these exist, or named CME officer within the LA, can advise schools on the best strategies for ensuring the minimum disruption to GRT pupils' education, for example dual registration with other schools or the provision of electronic or distance learning packages where these are available.

3. Families of Armed Forces - Families of members of the Armed Forces are likely to move frequently – both in UK and overseas and often at short notice. Schools and local authorities should contact the MOD Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) on 01980 618244 for advice on making arrangements to ensure continuity of education for those children when the family moves.

4. Missing children/runaways¹⁸ - Children who go missing or run away from home or care may be in serious danger and are vulnerable to crime, sexual exploitation or abduction as well as missing education. Further sources of information about missing children are listed at the back of this document.

Children who cease to attend a school – there are many reasons why a child stops attending a school. It could be because the parent chooses to home educate their child. However, where the reason for a child who has stopped attending a school is not known, the local authority must investigate the case and ensure the child is receiving suitable education.

St Oswald's uses the secure internet system – school2school – to allow schools to transfer pupil information to another school when the child moves..

Families moving between local authority areas can sometimes lead to a child becoming 'lost' in the system and consequently missing education. Where a child has moved, local

authorities should **check with other local authorities** – either regionally or nationally – and share information in order to ascertain where a child has moved. Once the location of the child is established, the relevant local authority must ensure that the child is receiving an education either by attending a school or otherwise.