



Burlish Park Primary School



MISSING FROM EDUCATION POLICY

DATE: June 2024

REVIEW DATE: June 2025



This policy was originally produced by Worcestershire County Council. Burlish Park Primary School has adopted this policy but has strengthened it by adding in extra layers of checking, monitoring and reporting.

Introduction

This policy and guidance provides an outline of procedures for identifying, registering and tracking Children Missing from Education. It also recognises the statutory responsibility of the school and identifies the steps that the school needs to take to ensure that they are compliant with such.

Our aim is to ensure that every child and young person has the opportunity to fulfil their potential and to ensure that no child or young person slips through the net.

This guidance has been produced to help meet the current statutory duties relating to the provision of education and the safeguarding and welfare of children:

- It supports the Authority to fulfil its obligations in relation to S175 of the Education Act 2002. This imposed a duty upon Children's Services Authorities and governing bodies to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- It supports Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004 which includes various provisions relating to safeguarding and promotion of welfare of children. More information about the implications of the Children Act 2004 can be found on the Every Child Matters website www.everychildmatters.gov.uk.
- It supports Section 436A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 which requires all local authorities to make arrangements to enable them to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children residing in their area who are not receiving a suitable education.
- It supports the requirements of Statutory Instrument 2006 No 1751 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- It supports and works alongside Worcestershire Authority's 'Children and Young People who go Missing from Care and Home'.
- It supports the Information Sharing and Common Assessment Framework procedures being developed in Worcestershire.

Definition of Children Missing from Education

Children missing from education in this document refers to all children of compulsory school age who are not on school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in alternative provision). It also refers to any child whose name will be deleted from a school admissions register (after the school and Local Authority have made reasonable enquiry to locate the pupil before the decision is made); because they have continuous unauthorised absence from school for a period of 20 school days; leave a school and future provision is unknown; fails to return from extended leave within 10 school days.

Why Children go Missing from Education

Children go missing from the education system because they:

- Fail to start school at Reception entry, hence never entering the authority's system
- Medical reasons
- Cease to attend due to unofficial exclusion
- Are withdrawn by parent/carer
- Elective Home Education
- Transfer between local authorities
- Are transient and traveller families
- Arrive in the country via asylum, refugee status or as EU nationals
- Permanent exclusion
- Fail to attend alternative provision or work placements



- Cease to attend for an unknown reason

It is to be noted that personal circumstances of the child or those of their families may contribute to the withdrawal process and the failure to make a transition, e.g. parents / carers escaping domestic violence, families moved quickly under the police witness protection scheme.

Children can go missing when they don't enter or fall out of the education system and there is no systematic process in place to:

- Identify those children
- Ensure that once identified they engage or re-engage with appropriate provision

There are also other circumstances by which a child could go missing. Most cases are relatively minor whereby the child returns home quickly, or is not believed to be in any serious danger even if they are found or do not return. However, there are more serious cases, such as being abducted by his/her parent, abductions by a stranger or abduction that later results in homicide. It is therefore essential that when any child goes missing from education, the case is approached in a sensitive and structured manner.

Identifying and Engaging Stakeholders

In paragraph 17.97 of the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report, Lord Laming recommended that: "Front line staff in each of the agencies which regularly come into contact with families with children must ensure that in each new contact, basic information about the child is recorded. This must include the child's name, address, age, the name of the child's primary carer, the child's GP and the name of the child's school if the child is of school age. Gaps in this information should be passed on to the relevant authority in accordance with local arrangements".

It is necessary to raise awareness amongst all stakeholders about how to inform the local authority about children missing from education, in order to ensure that agencies e.g. health and housing apply this principle consistently. It is often the case that another agency is aware of the arrival or the existence of a child living in the area but not in education, before the local authority is aware.

In order to ensure all children are receiving an education it will be necessary to regularly raise awareness with all stakeholders of the importance of missing children and remind agencies of the need to notify the local authority if they suspect a child is missing from education.

Reducing the Risk of Children Going Missing from Education

This guidance identifies procedures to reduce the risk of children falling out of the education system and going missing.

Action when New Pupils arrive

When pupils arrive in all community and voluntary controlled schools they must inform the Schools Admissions Team of any direct incoming casual/in-year, admission/transfer applications, in order that they can be registered and monitored through the School Admissions system. In the case of a statemented child where the parent/carers makes direct contact with the Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review Team, they will advise the School Admissions Team of the formal request in order that the application can be logged through the School Admissions Team statistics and be entered onto the Educational Management System.



Once on the school's admission register all receiving schools must complete the Child Joining Form on the Children's Services Portal and submit accordingly to the authority and pick up the s2s file from the DCSF secure website.

Action when Parent/Carer informs that pupils are leaving school to a known destination and identified education provision.

When a pupil leaves school the statutory requirements for schools is to:

- (1) Complete the Child Leaving form on the Children's Services Portal
- (2) Upload the pupil's file to the DCSF secure website.
- (3) Telephone the destination school to confirm pupil registration

If registration is not confirmed within 5 school days, the school should make enquiries as to the whereabouts of the family. If on enquiry, the pupil is not located a referral should be made to the Education Welfare Service. Burlish Park Primary will continue to chase and check both the Education Welfare Service and the receiving Local Authority to ensure a child joins and attends a new school. The school will contact the Director of Educational Services in the receiving authority when it is not satisfied that the child is safe and in their new school.

If the parent/carer has elected to home educate the child, the school must provide:

- ▪ A letter from parents declaring their wish to EHE their child
- ▪ Learner profile

Process for Monitoring Pupils who Cease to Attend

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 imposed a duty upon Children's Services Authorities and governing bodies to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The new statutory duties under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 requires that all education providers must begin enquiries as to the whereabouts of the child and family within 10 school days or sooner. If enquiries do not locate the pupil and resolve the issue a referral should be made to the Education Welfare Service. (The timescale for the referral should be not later than 20 school days of unauthorised absence or sooner, depending on the particular circumstances of the child – see notes on Looked After Children and those subject to a Child Protection Plan).

The pupils must remain on the school register until all reasonable enquiries are completed even if this means that the pupil will amass more than 20 days absence. The outcome of the school and Local Authority's attempts to trace the pupil will dictate the next steps. If they are unable to find the pupil they must refer the case to the appropriate agencies. The school should delete the pupil from the school register and transfer the pupil's information to the Lost Pupil data base via the s2s website.

Pupils with statements of special educational needs should not be deleted from the register until a review of the statement has taken place and the authority has agreed to change the name of the school in part IV of the statement.

When a child leaves school and their destination is unknown, an electronic CTF (Common Transfer File) is created using the 'destination unknown' code XXX XXXX. This file is uploaded onto S2S and the child's details automatically go onto the 'Lost Pupil Database' section of the site. Schools must inform the Education Welfare Service that this has been done. Until the school is satisfied that a child has been allocated a new school and is attending their new school (or is being educated at home) the school will continue to keep in weekly contact with the Education Welfare Service. After a period of one month the school will refer the child's case to the Local Authority Safeguarding Officer, Director of Children's Services and Social Care.

Files that are sent to known schools or Local Authorities but come back as rejected should be treated as the child now being missing from education and should be uploaded to the Lost Pupil Database as above and the Education Welfare Service informed. At this point the school



will then refer the child's case to the Local Authority Safeguarding Officer, Director of Children's Services and Social Care.

The Education Welfare Service makes enquiries by contacting other Local Authorities to ascertain if children missing from schools have been admitted on a register elsewhere.

Pupils on alternative packages

Details of those children dually registered or not on roll at a mainstream school and accessing education through alternative provision are held and monitored by the Pupil Inclusion Team. It is the schools responsibility to monitor the attendance of those pupils on its school register with alternative packages.

Key Actions to Reduce the Risk of Missing Children from Education

- All casual/in-year admissions and transfers (primary and secondary) from community and voluntary controlled schools will be administered by the School Admissions Team. Unsuccessful admission appeals of new arrivals will be monitored and chased up if an alternative school is not sought. In the case of a statemented child where the parent/carer makes direct contact with the Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review Team, they will advise the School Admissions Team of the formal request in order that the application can be logged through the School Admissions Team statistics and be entered onto the Educational Management System.
- The school will notify the Education Welfare Service of those children who have not arrived at primary school. If the Authority is notified that a child has not started, this will be referred to and followed up by the Education Welfare Service. In the case of statemented pupils these checks will be made by the Special Education Needs Assessment and Review Team and if necessary referred to the Education Welfare Service.
- The school will lead in the monitoring of the Education Pupil database and will liaise with the Education Welfare Officer when any children at risk of missing education are identified.
- The schools will keep admission and attendance registers, in line with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- The school will complete the Common Transfer Form s2s electronic document which schools are statutorily required to send to a pupil's receiving school within 5 days of their leaving the current school.
- The school will complete the Child Joining/Leaving Form on the Children's Services Portal and submit accordingly to the authority and pick up the s2s file from the DCSF secure website when children leave or join their school, including when the parent/carer has advised of Elective Home Education.
- Education Welfare Officers will actively seek out and identify those children missing from education, with the support of all stakeholders and agencies in the Local Authority.
- Permanently excluded pupils and potentially permanently excluded pupils and those referred to the Pupil Inclusion Team who are in alternative provision or dual registered will have their attendance monitored by the Pupil Inclusion Team's Education Welfare Officer.
- All schools that have pupils attending alternative provision or Pupil Referral Units retain dual registration and it is the schools responsibility to check individual pupils' attendance.
- Schools must complete returns to the Education Welfare Service of every registered pupil who fails to attend the school regularly or has unauthorised absence for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days.
- In the event of a child death, all schools are required to complete a standard notification form which is submitted to the Local Authority. If the child was



known to have involvement with internal services those services will be notified in order that their records can be amended. In the case of a statemented child where the Special Education Needs Assessment and Review Team are notified they will take the lead on notifying all relevant services and agencies.

Children subject to a Child Protection Plan - If a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan is believed to be missing then the Child Protection Co-ordinator must be informed immediately by the agency that has raised the concern.

Looked After Children (LAC) - If a Looked After Child is believed to be missing then the named Social Worker for the child must be informed immediately by the agency that has raised the concern.

Local Safeguarding Children Board Procedures – If at any time there are concerns about a child's welfare, and in particular if it is considered that a child may be, or is, suffering a significant harm, established Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures must be followed.

Referrals

- Child does not appear at entry to Reception.
- Child does not appear at the allocated school following casual/in-year admission or transfer.
- Referral from school when child ceases to attend (i.e. unauthorised absence for 10 sessions and there has been no or limited contact with parents/carers).
- Children with a substantial amount of authorised non-attendance with no evidence as to why this has been agreed.
- Children not attending alternative provision.
- Children permanently excluded from school where contact has been lost to offer attendance at a pupil referral unit, alternative school or provision.
- Children placed in the domestic refuge from outside of the area.
- Children educated other than at school i.e. elective home educated, where monitoring contact is lost.