



Staploe Education Trust:
Primary Schools

Missing Children Policy and Procedures

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Approved by:	Primary School Advisory Bodies
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Statement of Policy

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at our Trust Primary Schools, both on and off premises. This means that every attempt is made to ensure that we know where children are and that they are able to access their education. Through the strict monitoring of registers, site security regular checks and rigorous application of off-site protocol, we achieve this

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust Primary Schools Attendance Policy, which details the management of children's attendance and the school Safeguarding Policy which outlines the risk of children missing from education.

In the unlikely event that a child cannot be accounted for, during the school day, our missing child procedure is followed.

Missing Child Procedures

Child Unaccounted for on the Premises

1. As soon as staff become aware that a child does not appear to be present, the Headteacher or – in their absence – a member of the leadership team is alerted.
2. The Headteacher or delegated staff members conduct a thorough search of the premises. All staff on site will be notified.
3. The register is checked to ensure that the child was in attendance, and that no other children cannot be accounted for.
4. Doors and gates are checked to ensure there has been no breach of security whereby a child could leave the site unobserved.
5. If the child is not found within 10 minutes, police are informed using 999 and then parents or carers will be contacted.
6. The Headteacher talks to the staff to ascertain when and where the child was last seen and records this.
7. The Executive Headteacher is informed of the incident and will arrange to carry out an investigation.
8. If appropriate, the Executive Headteacher will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer for Safeguarding.

Child Unaccounted for During Off-Site Activity

1. As soon as staff become aware that a child does not appear to be present, staff ask the children to stand with their designated person so that a head count may be completed to ensure that the child is not present and that no other children are unaccounted for.
2. The home-base contact at the school is contacted immediately and the incident is reported.
3. The Police are contacted, and the missing child reported.
4. The Headteacher or delegated staff member contacts the parent or carer, who is asked to make their way to the school.
5. Staff attending the off-site activity return to school as quickly as possible with the remaining children.
6. In an indoor off-site venue, staff will contact the venue security who will handle the premises search and contact the Police if the child is not found.
7. The Headteacher will talk to the staff to ascertain when and where the child was last seen and records this.
8. The Executive Headteacher will be informed of the incident and arrange to carry out an investigation.
9. If appropriate, the Executive Headteacher will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer for Safeguarding.

The Investigation

1. Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
2. Immediately following the event, the Headteacher must establish the facts and record these verbatim, where possible.
3. Staff involved should be asked to write a statement as soon as is practicable following the event.
4. The Headteacher and staff involved must cooperate and support any subsequent investigation undertaken by the Executive Headteacher or a Trustee.
5. Parents or carers should be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation.

Children Missing from Education

In 2016 the DfE amended the legislation to assist schools and local authorities in identifying **children missing from education**.

The changes require schools (including academies and independent schools) to inform Cambridgeshire County Council when a pupil is about to be deleted from the admissions register under any of the fifteen grounds (Regulation 8 of the 2006 Regulations).

In addition to the above duty to notify the LA, the revised Children Missing Education Guidance also highlights the need for all schools to:

- record details of the pupil's residence, the name of the person with whom they will reside, the date from which they will reside there, and the name of the destination school (where they can reasonably obtain this information);
- inform their LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school.

The changes made put emphasis on the requirements for schools and Local Authorities to work collaboratively when making reasonable enquiries to locate pupils who fail to return 10 days after an agreed authorised leave or 20 days without authorisation.

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks

of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

See appendix 1 and 2 for school procedures when a child is missing from education,

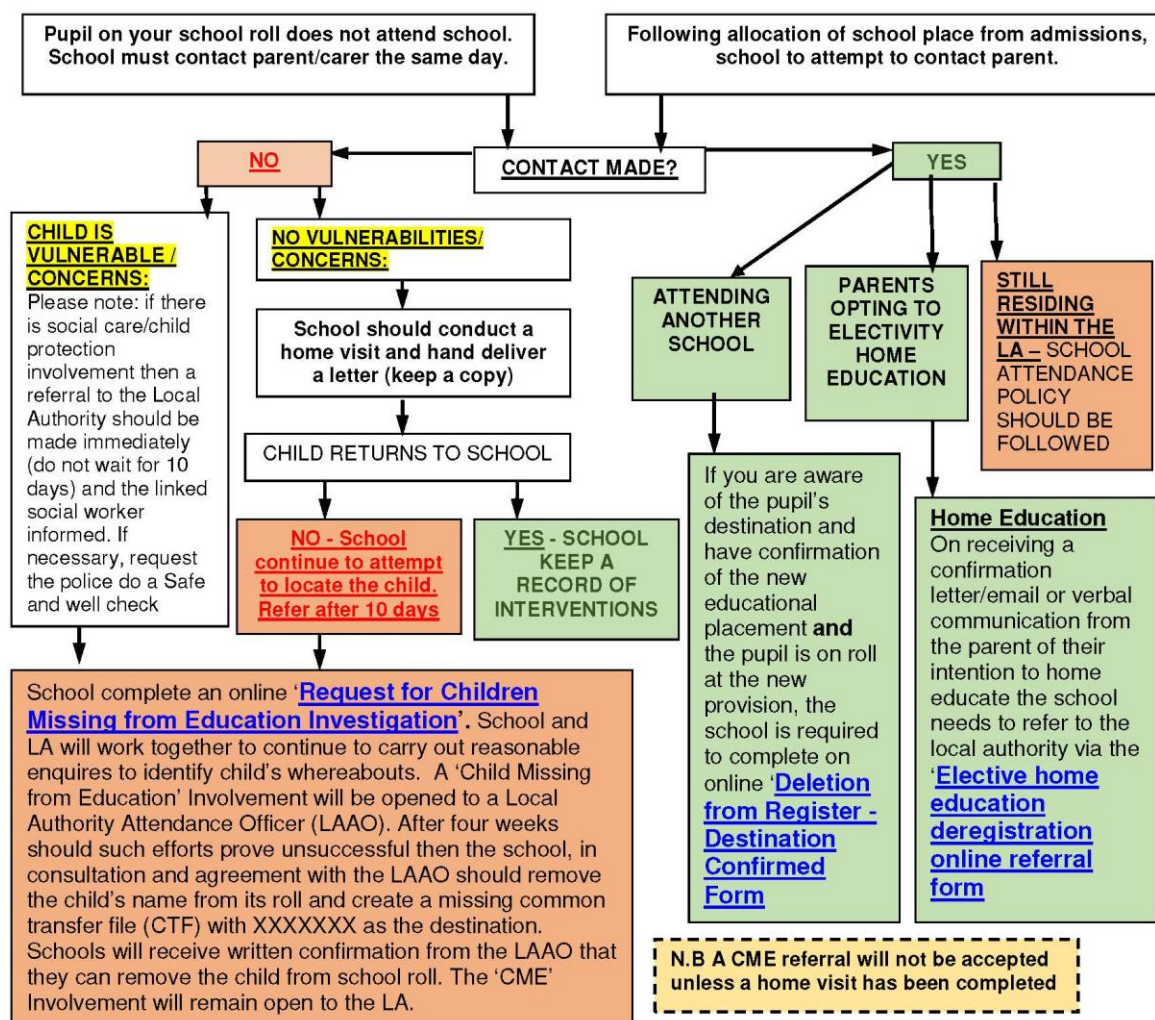
Policy Review

This policy will normally be reviewed on a 3-year cycle. This review may be brought forward as required by the School or Trust to reflect changes in supporting advice/guidance.

Appendix 1: Pupil Absent from School Flow Chart



PART 3: **PUPIL ABSENT FROM SCHOOL - Cambridgeshire School Process** **for Children Missing from Education**



Vulnerable child – examples:

Looked after child or accommodated child	CP or CIN register or subject of a CP investigation
Has or is in the process of being referred to MASH	Has significant additional support/leaning needs
Has medical issues including mental health	Is a victim of bullying
Has cultural issues	Is at the centre of a custody dispute
A house where you're aware of domestic violence	Is open to Early Help
Has a history of running away	Is a young carer
History of substance misuse personally and/or within the family	

Footnotes:

1. If at any time during the process the school or any agency believes the child may be at risk, CP procedures must be implemented.
2. If the child is on the CP register the social worker or team manager must be notified immediately
3. Records should be kept of all actions taken, decision reached and outcomes

PART 3 (From CME Policy): PUPIL ABSENT FROM SCHOOL - Cambridgeshire School Process for Children Missing from Education – December 2020

Appendix 2: School Checklist for Child Absence with No Contact

SCHOOL CHECKLIST



Use the recommended checklist below as a guide to taking proportionate action when a child is absent with no contact.

Schools should triage each case to determine the priority and urgency of particular interventions, for example home visit.

Keep a chronology of all your attempts to contact the family, copies of emails, voice mail messages, home visits, letters sent / hand delivered etc and the outcome of these checks. Include the phone numbers and email addresses you've tried.

First Day Response

- Contact all emergency contact numbers as well as parent/carer.
- Check with siblings in other schools.
- Check what other staff may know.

Suggested steps the school should take if the child has been identified as **vulnerable**

- As Above - plus.
- Do a home visit and leave a letter if there is no response (keep a copy).
- Contact relevant agencies involved with the family / child.
- Make all reasonable and practical efforts to locate the child / family. This could include speaking to neighbours, known friends of the family, extended family, community members, GP, Police etc.

Day 2 – 10

- Continue to make all reasonable and practical checks to contact the child, parent/carer, family.
- Do a home visit and leave a letter if there is no response (keep a copy).
- Check with health professionals e.g. school nurse.

(Day 2 – 5 for vulnerable child)

As above with day 1-10 plus:

- Continue to liaise with named person such as a Social worker, family worker etc.
- Check with the police, if appropriate.

Day 10 (Day 5 for vulnerable child)

- Complete the online CME referral with as much detail as possible & attach your chronology.
- Continue to work alongside the LAAO allocated the CME until the child is found or the LAAO advises school they can take off roll.
- If you gain further information after the child is off roll, notify the LAAO who was working on the case.

CME Referrals will only be accepted if the appropriate levels of investigation has taken place