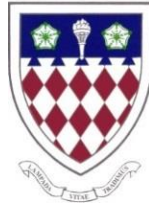


SPALDING HIGH SCHOOL



CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION POLICY

HEADMISTRESS:	Mrs M K ANDERSON
LINK GOVERNOR:	Mr E FRAGALE
DATE AGREED:	November 2024
REVIEW FREQUENCY:	Triennial

Executive Summary:

Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (added by the Education and Inspections Act 2006) “requires all local education authorities to make arrangements to enable them to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in their area who are not receiving a suitable education”. The Local Authority must also ensure that it “monitors the numbers of children/young people in the authority who are not receiving an education, including those new to the area or the country”.

Spalding High School follows the principles and protocols established within the Lincolnshire County Council “Children Missing Education” Policy & Practice 2021. This policy is referenced completely from the guidelines issued by the Department for Education “Children Missing Education” September 2016. Spalding High School adheres to all statutory legislation regarding pupil/student attendance, including “Working Together to Improve School Attendance” (DfE) September 2022. All credit is given to these policies in the formation of Spalding High School Policy.

Related Policies:

Behaviour For Learning Policy
Attendance Policy
Safeguarding Policy

Chair of Governors

Date

Headmistress

Date

Section 1: Definitions

- 1.1 For the purpose of this policy, a child missing education is defined as:
“Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is not on a school admissions register, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, privately, or in alternative provision) and who has been out of education provision for a substantial period of time (practice nationally is four weeks).”
LCC Children Missing Education” Policy & Practice 2021.
- 1.2 The process of looking for children who are absent from school (and their whereabouts is unknown), starts as soon as school has sufficient evidence to confirm this. Children and young people with poor or reduced school attendance are often vulnerable. Not only are they missing significant periods of learning, they may become children missing from education. A child is not considered to be a child missing education whilst school have knowledge that the child remains in the area and their school remains the nearest available. Where non-attendance is raised by a school, they are encouraged to manage this either in house or through external agencies.
- 1.3 A child at risk of missing education is defined as:
- Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is on admissions register of a school but has less than 50% attendance (severe absence) in a school term.
 - Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is subject to a modified/reduced timetable (RTT) for more than one school term.
 - Any child on less than 25 hours education per week.
- LCC Children Missing Education” Policy & Practice 2021.*
- 1.4 Schools must inform the Local Authority about students who have been absent for significant periods of time and that the School are not authorising this absence. Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is on roll of a school but has 10 consecutive days of unauthorised absences is known as a **Pupil Not Attending Regularly (PNAR)**. This information is reported to the Local Authority through the PNAR notification survey.
- 1.5 Children who are not on a full timetable may be at risk of not receiving a suitable or sufficient education and could potentially become a child at risk of missing education. Therefore, all children of compulsory school age who are on a reduced timetable must be reported to the Local Authority through the **Reduced Timetable (RTT)** notification survey. This information must be reported on a six weekly basis.
- 1.6 Both the PNAR and RT surveys can be found at
<https://snaps.lincolnshire.gov.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=156715892508>
This document is also available to staff via Perspective Lite.
- 1.7 SHS CME Policy will also be implemented in cases where:
- Children suddenly stop attending for a variety of reasons.
 - Children are removed from school by their parents/carers for a variety of reasons.
- 1.8 It is expected that schools will have carried out all reasonable enquiries within their capacity to ascertain the whereabouts of the child, prior to informing the Local Authority that the child is missing education.

Section 2: Reasons children go missing from education

- 2.1 Children “go missing” from education for a number of reasons, including:
- they don't start school at the appropriate time and so they do not enter the educational system;
 - failing to make successful transition from infant to junior and primary to secondary;
 - not attending following an in-year transfer of schools;
 - they are removed by their parents/carers for a range of reasons;
 - they cease to attend due to illness, bullying or exclusion;

- they fail to find a suitable school place after moving to a new area;
- the family moves home regularly;
- involvement in youth offending;
- parents are failing to provide adequate learning whilst home educating;
- frequent absence leading to low attendance;
- there are difficulties at home, including a family breakdown;
- the child is a victim of exploitation.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Section 3: Parents/carers' responsibilities

- 3.1 Parents/carers have a duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive suitable full-time education. Some parents/carers 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.
- 3.2 Where parents/carers notify school in writing that they are home educating their child, SHS will delete the child's name from the admission register and inform the Local Authority. Where parents/carers only verbally indicate their intention to withdraw their child for home education, the School will notify the Local Authority immediately and leave the child's name on the admissions register until written notification is received.
- 3.3 The School will administer an annual data checking audit to ensure that we hold accurate information about our pupil/students' personal details. This is typically conducted in September. Parents/carers are expected to inform the School as a matter of urgency if their child's details change, for example a house move, new GP, medical information or changes to where the child stays during the week in the case of separated/divorced parents/carers.

Section 4: The School's responsibilities

- 4.1 The School must enter students on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed that the student will attend school.
- 4.2 If a student fails to attend on the agreed date, the School will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the Local Authority/relevant agencies at the earliest opportunity and in doing so instigate the Children Missing Education process.
- 4.3 The School will monitor students' attendance through daily registration and will work closely with students, parents/carers, external agencies and the Local Authority where children fail to attend regularly, or have missed **ten school days** or more without permission.
- 4.4 Where a student has not returned to school for **ten days** after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for **twenty consecutive school days**, the student can be removed from the admission register when the School and the Local Authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the School does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the student is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.
- 4.5 If the School ascertain that the child is no longer at the known address, we will report the child as missing education via the Local Authority Children Missing Education notification survey and complete a risk assessment detailing any concerns we have regarding the safety and well-being of the child. The CME notification survey will be completed after **five days** (or sooner), if the School has evidence that the child is missing from education and will continue to make reasonable enquiries unless we have sufficient evidence that the child has left the area.

- 4.6 When a child is removed from the School roll based on regulation 9 (1) g (outside reasonable distance), the School will complete a “Leavers’ File” (CML) so that the child can be tracked until they have arrived at their new destination school.
- 4.7 The School will arrange full-time education for suspended students from the sixth school day of a fixed period suspension.
- 4.8 We have a safeguarding duty in respect of **all** of our students and therefore, we investigate any unexplained absence, irrespective of their duration or statutory/recommended timeframes. This protocol is extended to students within the Sixth Form although referral via the CME process will not be actioned given students are beyond compulsory school age.
- 4.9 Schools must notify the Local Authority when a child’s name is to be removed from the admissions register at a non-standard transition point under any of the fifteen grounds set out in Appendix A of the Department for Education August 2024 “Children Missing Education” regulations. (See Appendix A link of this policy). This duty does not apply to standard transition points. The School will make reasonable enquiries to establish the child’s destination before removing them from the admissions register.
- 4.10 The School will inform the Local Authority within **five days** of adding a child’s name to the admissions register. This duty does not apply to standard transition points.
- 4.11 The School will complete the Local Authority Notification of Admissions register Changes and Children Missing Education online survey each time a child is added or removed from the admissions register.
- 4.12 The term ‘reasonable enquiries’ grants schools and local authorities a degree in flexibility in decision making, particularly as the steps that need to be taken in a given case will vary.

Section 5: The Local Authority’s responsibilities

- 5.1 These are specified within the following documents:
Lincolnshire County Council “Children Missing Education” Policy & Practice 2021.
Department for Education “Children Missing Education” August 2024.

Appendices:

Appendix A: DFE Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities August 2024

Found via this link:

[Children missing education guidance - August 2024.pdf \(spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk\)](#)

Appendix B: Lincolnshire County Council CME Flowchart.

Contact Details

CME Team

Email: cme@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01522 552771

CME referral for Lincolnshire schools

<https://snaps.lincolnshire.gov.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=156715892508>

EHE Team

Email: ehe@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01522 553241

EHE referral for Lincolnshire schools

<https://snaps.lincolnshire.gov.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=159903791844>

LCC CME Appendix B (1) - Children Missing Education Flow Chart

A child/young person is on roll of a school but not attending	A child/young person moving out of county	Family indicate they are moving to another country	School Admissions
<p>School attempts to contact parents. Good practice is to contact from day 1 of absence but no later than day 3</p> <p>The school must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> make on-going attempts, beginning on the first day of any unexplained absence, to contact the pupil's parents/carers either by telephone, or text messaging <input type="checkbox"/> make further attempts to contact the parents, either by letter or by home visiting <input type="checkbox"/> contact any other schools where the pupil or their siblings are known to have been pupils <input type="checkbox"/> check with the pupil's peer group to ascertain if they are aware of any change in the pupil's place of residency <input type="checkbox"/> contact any relevant agency, for example, the family welfare officer in the relevant armed forces in the case of a service child. <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>School should be following their school attendance and safeguarding procedures. If no contact is made with parents/carers, complete home visit</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>School/Academy should continue to make an effort to engage the family using e-mails, telephone and other contact methods. Records of each attempt to contact must be made, ensuring there is a complete and comprehensive record of the steps taken including dates, actions and outcomes for each step</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>If there is confirmation that the child is at the place of residence known to the school but not attending, the school continues to follow their non school attendance procedures. Do not remove from roll. After 10 days of unauthorised absence inform the local authority through the Pupil Not Attending Regularly (PNAR) notification survey</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>If there is confirmation that the child is no longer at the place of residence known to the school but can still attend the school, make amendments to child's file and continue with non-school attendance procedures</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>If there is confirmation that the child is no longer at the place of residence known to the school and will not be attending the school, check that the child is attending the new school if known before removing from roll. Once confirmed remove from roll and complete CML file.</p> <p>If a new school is not known, report the child as child missing education (CME) notification survey. Do not take off roll.</p> <p>After 20 days, if no further information following joint investigation between school and local authority, remove from roll and complete CML file.</p>	<p>Check that the contact details for the parent(s) are/is correct. This includes the family's new address, name of new school (if known), leaving date, email addresses of family and new school (if known)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>The new school should make contact. If not, make contact with the school given to confirm that the child is on roll. If confirmation received that child is attending, take child off roll and complete CML file.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>If no new school is given or child is not attending new school and that school does not have a start date, after 5 days from leaving date, report the child as CME through the notification survey. Do not take off roll</p> <p>After 20 days, if no further information following joint investigation between school and local authority, remove from roll and complete CML file.</p>	<p>Check that the contact details for the parent(s) are/is correct. This includes the family's new address, name of new school (if known), leaving date, email addresses of family and new school (if known)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>If the information is provided, remove child from roll and complete the CML file within 5 days of leaving date</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>If the information is not provided complete the CME notification survey</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>After 20 days, if no further information following joint investigation between school and local authority, remove from roll and complete CML</p>	<p>If a school place has been allocated. (reception, transfer from infant to junior or year 6 to 7) and there has been no acceptance/agreed start date, by parent/carers, school should make attempts to engage (telephone, texts, e-mails letters and home visit)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>If a child has been allocated a place and they do not arrive on the expected day i.e. start of term, the school must follow non-attendance procedures (see column one and follow same procedure). Do not assume that child is at another school.</p>
	Health Related Absence		Mid- year application
	<p>If a child has been out of school for 15 days or more (consecutive or cumulative) due to health reasons and there is robust medical evidence to support the absence, school can follow the process of referral to the Local Authority for alternative provision as outlined in the LA Policy on Education for Children with Medical Needs.</p>		<p>If application is to transfer schools, the leaving school should keep on roll until it has been confirmed by the new school that they have been put on roll of that school. A child should be placed on roll at the point of acceptance by parent/carers.</p> <p>If there is no confirmation, the leaving school must follow non-attendance procedures (see column one)</p>
	Child who is not in receipt of full time education	Looked after Children (LAC)	Traveller Children
	<p>A child not in receipt of full time education (usually 25 hrs) must be entered on the Reduced Timetable notification survey</p>	<p>If a LAC child is moving placement and no longer attending the same school, the current school needs to liaise with social worker and virtual school. Do not remove from roll until directed by Virtual School</p>	<p>If a parent notifies the school that they are travelling, the school should ask the parent for a return date and contact details. The family should notify the school if there is any change to the return date and provide a new date. If the child does not return to school on the agreed date and is not able to confirm or approve the alternative, the school follow the non-attendance procedures (see column one)</p>