



West View Primary School

Children Missing Education Policy

Policy approved by Local Academy Committee: December 2024

Date for Review: December 2026

Statement of Intent

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs that they may have. A child of compulsory school age who is not registered at a school and who is not receiving a suitable education otherwise than at school can be defined as a 'child missing education' or CME. Unfortunately, children missing from education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation and becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training) later in life.

Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. The Local Authority has a legal duty to identify when there are CME and help them back into education. This policy highlights what our school will do to help the Local Authority with its duty to intervene early in the lives of vulnerable children in order to help prevent poor outcomes.

Children Missing Education - Hartlepool

Hartlepool Local Authority

Tel: 01429 402728

Email: CME@hartlepool.gov.uk

This policy does not address pupils who are considered to be absent from education, which is where a registered pupil is not attending regularly, including where they are persistently or severely absent from school. Procedures for addressing instances where pupils are not attending regularly are set out in our school's Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- [Education Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Education and Inspections Act 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Children Act 1989 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Children Act 2004 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [The School Information \(England\) Regulations 2008 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [The Education \(Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils\) \(England\) Regulations 2007 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Children Missing Education - Guidance for Local authorities](#)
- [School admissions code - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Safeguarding and Child Protection

Reasons for Children Missing Education (CME)

There are a number of reasons as to why children miss education, including the following:

- Failing to be registered at a school at the age of five
- Failing to make a successful transition
- Suspension/exclusion
- Mid-year transfer of school
- Families moving into a new area

Aside from these reasons, if a child is missing from education, particularly repeatedly, this can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, such as the following:

- Abuse and neglect, including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), potentially involving county lines
- So-called 'honour-based' abuse, including the risk of FGM or the risk of forced marriage
- Mental health issues
- Risk of substance abuse
- Risk of travelling to conflict zones

More information on the above safeguarding concerns can be found here: [Procedures and Guidance on Specific Issues that Affect Children - Tees Safeguarding Children Partnerships' Procedures](#)

Staff will be aware that early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding relating to CME and to help prevent the risks of a pupil going missing in the future. All staff will be made aware of unauthorised absence procedures and this policy to ensure that they know how to respond to possible cases of CME.

Children at particular risk of missing education

The following list, although not exhaustive, indicates groups of pupils who are most at risk of missing education:

- **Pupils at risk of harm or neglect** - where this is suspected, local procedures will be followed. If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made immediately to Children's Social Care via The Children's Hub (CHUB) and the Police - if appropriate.

Hartlepool Children's Social Care Services

The Children's Hub (CHUB): 01429 284284

Email: childrenshub@hartlepool.gov.uk

Emergency Duty Team: 01642 524552

Local Procedures: [Procedures for the Safeguarding Process - Tees Safeguarding Children Partnerships' Procedures \(teescpp.org.uk\)](#)

- **Pupils from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) families**

Research has shown that many children from these families can become disengaged from education. It is therefore important that schools inform the local authority 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.

- **Children of Service Personnel** - the school will contact the Ministry of Defence Children's Education Advisory Service (01980 618244) and the Virtual School for advice to ensure continuity of education for these pupils when the family moves.

[Children and the Armed Services - Tees Safeguarding Children Partnerships' Procedures \(teescpp.org.uk\)](https://www.teescpp.org.uk)

[Defence Children Services \(DCS\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Contacts for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families/Children of Service Personnel

Hartlepool Virtual School

Executive Headteacher for Vulnerable Pupils - Emma Rutherford

Tel: 01429 284370

Email: emma.rutherford@hartlepool.gov.uk

- **Missing children and runaways** - should the school suspect that a child has gone missing or run away, an appropriate staff member will contact the Police and Children's Social Care as well as consult the DfE for advice on missing children.

[Children Who Go Missing - Tees Safeguarding Children Partnerships' Procedures \(teescpp.org.uk\)](https://www.teescpp.org.uk)

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.

- **Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice System**

Information regarding Youth Justice Services in the North East of England and Cumbria can be found here: [Youth justice services: North East and Cumbria - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Children who have offended or are at risk of doing so are also at risk of disengaging from education. Local Authority Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) are responsible for supervising those young people (aged 8 to 18). Where a child is registered at a school and is given a custodial sentence, the school may be required to keep their name on the admission register where there are reasonable grounds to believe they will return to the school after they cease to be detained. As set out in the 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance, in determining whether the pupil will return to the school, it is expected that school will discuss this with the pupil's YOT worker. Schools are expected to communicate with the pupil's YOT worker while the pupil is in custody and remains on the

school roll to discuss the pupil's educational needs, progress and return to the school upon their release, where appropriate.

- **Children who cease to attend 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 should investigate the case and satisfy itself that the child is receiving suitable education.

- **Children of new migrant families**

As a school, we will remain vigilant to the increased risk of a child missing education if they are part of a new migrant family who may not yet have settled into a fixed address, or may have arrived into a Local Authority area without the authority becoming aware, therefore increasing the risk of the child missing education.

Roles and Responsibilities

The appropriate school staff are responsible for:

- Entering pupils on the admissions register on the first day that the school have agreed that the pupil will attend or if no date has been agreed, the first date that they attend the school
- In the event that a pupil fails to attend school on the agreed or notified date, undertaking reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts, and consider notifying the Local Authority at the earliest opportunity
- Monitoring pupils' attendance through a daily register and addressing poor or irregular attendance - in line with the Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Agreeing with the Local Authority what intervals are best to inform them of pupils who are regularly absent from school, or who have missed 10 days of education or more where the absence has been recorded with one or more codes statistically classified as unauthorised
- Removing pupils from the admission register where they have not returned to school for 20 consecutive school days, and the school and Local Authority have failed to establish the pupil's whereabouts after making reasonable enquiries
- Notifying the LA if any pupil is to be deleted from the admission register in the circumstance outlined in Regulation 8 of [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- Arranging full-time education for suspended pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed-period suspension - [Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance](#)
- Providing information to the Local Authority regarding standard transitions, as and when requested to do so
- Keeping an accurate and up-to-date admissions register by encouraging parents and carers to inform them of any changes
- Where reasonably possible, holding more than one emergency contact number for each pupil and where available, holding an email address for each of these contacts

All staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of children and families who are open to frontline services, including those who are looked after and in foster care placements
- Being alert to the potential need to implement early help for a pupil who is frequently missing or goes missing from care or home

- Being aware of the school's procedures for managing unauthorised absence and children missing from education
- Where staff have concerns about pupils relating to CME, using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated to the DSL or deputy DSL

The Local Authority is responsible for:

- Establishing the identities of children in the area who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving education provision otherwise, in line with the Local Authority's duty under section 436A of the [Education Act 1996](#) - *this relates to children of compulsory school age*
- Having robust policies and procedures in place to enable them to meet their duty in relation to these children, including ensuring that there are effective tracking and enquiry systems in place
- Providing full-time education for permanently excluded pupils from the sixth school day of exclusion
- Serving notice on parents, requiring them to satisfy the Local Authority that the child is receiving suitable education, when it comes to the Local Authority's attention that a child might not be receiving such education
- Issuing School Attendance Orders (SAO) to parents who fail to satisfy the Local Authority that their child is receiving a suitable education, and the Local Authority believes that the child should attend school
- Prosecuting parents who do not comply with a School Attendance Order (SAO)
- Prosecuting or issuing penalty notices to parents of school-registered children who fail to ensure their children attend school regularly (where children are of compulsory school age)
- Applying to court for an Education Supervision Order for a child to support them to go to school
- Ensuring that children identified as not receiving suitable education are returned to full-time education, either at the school or elsewhere
- Ensuring that children who return to full-time education are appropriately supported, taking into account the reasons why they missed education in the first place
- Arranging suitable provision for pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans where their parent chooses for them to be home educated, and reviewing this annually
- Liaising and sharing information with other agencies to support children who miss education
- Sharing the fact that a pupil has a social worker with the school
- Referring to Local Authority Children's Social Care where there is concern for a child's welfare, as well as the Police if there is reason to suspect that a crime has been committed

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their children, if of compulsory school age, are receiving suitable full-time education
- Notifying the school in writing where they will be home educating their child, in order for the child to be removed from the admissions register
- Where requested, meeting with the school, LA, and other key professionals to consider whether home education would be in the best interests of their child, particularly where they have SEND, are vulnerable, or have a social worker - ideally, this would be done before a final decision has been made
- Notifying the school regarding any absences or changes to the pupil's education arrangements

- Ensuring that schools are kept up to date with any changes to personal details (including any changes to home addresses, telephone numbers or email addresses)

Induction and Training

The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education will be explained to staff during their induction.

All staff will receive annual safeguarding and child protection training, including an update on the various safeguarding concern possibilities that CME could represent, any changes to the early help process and staff members' role in this process.

Knowledge and understanding will be checked through the provision of monthly safeguarding quizzes, set by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (who is also the Headteacher).

Working with others

Families moving from one Local Authority to another can sometimes lead to a child being lost in the system and consequently missing education. When a child moves, Local Authorities will work together, regionally or nationally, to ensure that this does not happen. The Local Authority will raise awareness of its procedures with local schools, partners and agencies working with children and families. As a school, we will ensure that staff are familiar with these procedures and when they need to be followed.

To assist the Local Authority in tracing CME, it has contacts with:

- [Department for Work and Pensions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- [UK Visas and Immigration - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- [HMRC services: sign in or register: Sign in to HMRC online services - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

If a pupil with a social worker is absent from school for an unexplained reason or they are missing from education, we will inform the pupil's social worker.

West View Primary School uses CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) to allow the transfer of pupil information when a child moves to another education setting. In addition to this, we will also send a CTF (Common Transfer File) to transfer pupil information to the receiving school. This is done through the DfE's secure internet system - school2school.

Safeguarding

West View Primary School recognises that children missing from education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues. Where there are concerns that a pupil missing from education is linked to a safeguarding issue, action will be taken in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

In line with the [Children Act 2004](#), we will follow appropriate procedures when carrying out reasonable enquiries, such as the DSL or deputy DSL conducting discussions with neighbours, relatives, landlords and other stakeholders to determine whether a child may be at risk of harm.

For the purpose of this policy, '**reasonable enquiries**' are defined as limited, investigative powers that we, as a school, may action to determine a child's whereabouts and whether they may be in danger.

The DSL, or deputy DSL, will record that they have completed these procedures and, if necessary, make a referral to The Children's Hub or the Police. School staff will refer to the threshold document (Framework of Need) to determine when a case should be referred to Local Authority Children's Social Care - [framework-of-need-tees.pdf](#)

Where the whereabouts and safety of a child is unknown, we, in conjunction with the Local Authority, may carry out the following actions:

- Make contact with the parent, relatives and neighbours using known contact details
- Check local databases within the Local Authority
- Check data transfer systems
- Follow local information sharing arrangements and, where possible, make enquiries via other local databases and agencies e.g. those of housing providers, school admissions, health services, Police, refuge, Youth Justice Services, children's social care and HMRC
- Check with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and/or the Border Force
- Check with agencies known to be involved with the family
- Check with the Local Authority and school from which the pupil moved originally - if known
- Check with any Local Authority and school to which the child may have moved
- Check with the Local Authority where the pupil lives, if this is different to where the school is located
- In the case of Service Personnel, check with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Children's Education Advisory Service - [Children's Education Advisory Service \(CEAS\) - GOV.UK](#)
- Conduct home visits via an appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessments, and, if appropriate, make enquiries with neighbours or relatives

Please note: *This list is not exhaustive as the steps that need to be taken in a given case will vary. The term 'reasonable' also makes clear that there is a limit to what the school and Local Authority are expected to do. As a school, together with the Local Authority, we will use our judgement towards what reasonable enquiries are appropriate, once all of the facts of the case have been taken into account.*

Admissions Register

West View Primary School will ensure that the admissions register is kept up-to-date at all times, and will encourage parents, via communications such as emails, texts and via social media, to notify us of any changes as they occur. This will assist both us as a school and the Local Authority when making enquiries to locate missing children.

Pupils will be recorded on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day on which it has been agreed, or the day that we have been notified, as the date that the pupil will attend. Once a pupil has been recorded on the admissions register, we will notify the Local Authority within five days and will supply them with all of the details contained on the admissions register for the new pupil.

Where a parent notifies us that their child will live at another address, whether in addition to or instead of their current address, we will record the following information on the admissions register:

- The address
- The full name of each parent the pupil will normally live with
- The date when the pupil will normally start living there

Where a parent or carer notifies us that the pupil is registered at another school, or will be attending a different school in future, we will record the following information on the admissions register:

- The name of the new school
- The date when the pupil first attended, or is due to attend, that school

We will make contact with the new school to confirm the child's admission. If the child has not been registered as expected, a CME referral would be made to the Local Authority.

Removing a pupil from the admissions register

As a school, we will inform the Local Authority of any pupil who will be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parent and are being educated outside the school system e.g. Elective Home Education

Hartlepool - Elective Home Education

Elective Home Education Officer: Katie Storey

Tel: 01429 523346

Email: ehe@hartlepool.gov.uk

[Elective Home Education | Elective Home Education | Hartlepool Borough Council](#)

- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the school
- Have been certified as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither they nor their parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order, and the school does not reasonably believe they will be returning at the end of that period
- Have been permanently excluded
- Have died
- Have been registered at another school where it is not indicated this should be the case
- Are registered at more than one school, but have failed to attend the school and the proprietor of any other schools concerned have consented to the deletion
- Have been granted authorised leave but have failed to attend school within 20 school days after the period of authorised absence ended, and:
 - There is reason to believe the pupil is not unable to attend school
 - The Local Authority and school are unable to determine the pupil's whereabouts after making joint reasonable enquiries
- Have been continuously absent from school for a period of at least 20 school days, and:
 - The absence was not authorised
 - There is reason to believe the pupil is not unable to attend school
 - The Local Authority and school are unable to determine the pupil's whereabouts after making joint reasonable enquiries
- The pupil was admitted to receive nursery education and since completion has not transferred to Reception, or a higher class, at the school

We will notify the Local Authority that a pupil is to be removed from the admissions register as soon as any of the above criteria are met, and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is actually removed.

If a pupil's name is to be removed from the admissions register, we will provide the Local Authority with the following information:

- The full name of the pupil
- Address

- The full name and address of any parent/carer with whom the pupil lives
- At least one telephone number of the parent/carer with whom the pupil lives
- The full name and address of the parent/carer who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable
- The name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date, if applicable
- The grounds for removal from the admissions register under Regulation 8 of [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukreg/2006/1111/2006)

Where the name of a pupil with a social worker is to be removed from the admissions register, the pupil's social worker will be informed by a member of the Safeguarding Team.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Headteacher (who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead). Relevant Local Authority staff, including the Children Missing Education Officer, will also be consulted as part of the policy review.

The next scheduled review for this policy is December 2026.