



Child Missing In Education Policy

Updated: September 2025
Next Review: September 2027

The safety of our pupils is our priority whilst they are in our care at school. This policy sets out our procedures for reducing the risk of children missing education (or are in danger of missing education), as well as our procedures in the unlikely event of a child missing in school.

The school's definition of a child missing education is based on DfE guidance available via the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/395138/Children_missing_education_Statutory_guidance_for_local_authorities.pdf

'A compulsory school-age child who is not on the roll of a school, not placed in alternative provision by a local authority, and who is not receiving a suitable education at home'.

Suitable education is defined as: 'efficient full-time education suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he/she may have'.

Alternative provision is defined as: 'educational provision arranged by local authorities or schools, and made off-site by a voluntary or private sector provider or by a Pupil Referral Unit'.

The school's definition of a child missing in school is any child whose whereabouts cannot be verified by the adult responsible for him / her.

This policy is written in accordance with the *Children Missing Education – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (DfE, 2016)*, *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025)*, and Kent County Council procedures for CME.

Children missing education are at significant risk of safeguarding harm. Any concerns must be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2. Responsibilities

- It is the Head teacher's responsibility to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of this policy, what is expected, the procedures to follow and to ensure that the policy is reviewed on a regular basis.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and act at all times according to its guidance.
- Class teachers, or those undertaking the duty of class teacher, are responsible for completing Attendance Registers. They must be completed accurately and promptly according to guidelines. Completed registers must be returned to the school office before 9:15am and again before 1.30pm
- It is the School Secretary's responsibility to oversee the Attendance Registers and record any absences in on the school's electronic system along with the reason for absence. If a child is absent from school without a reason provided, it is the School Secretary's responsibility to make contact with the child's parent(s) / carer(s) to verify the absence immediately. If the parent / carer cannot be contacted on the first day of an absence from school, the School Secretary will alert the school's Education Welfare Officer by email.
- It is the responsibility of the School Secretary and the Class Teacher to monitor children's attendance in school and to provide a record of attendance in the child's termly report to parents. It is their responsibility to report any concerns about attendance to the Head teacher, who will use the Local Authority's 'Three Letter System' to work with parents to secure rapid improvement in attendance.
- Updated contact information for parents and carers is sought and maintained by the School Secretary.
- If a member of staff takes a pupil, group or class out of school they are responsible for informing parents and staff at the school office.
- It is the responsibility of parents to inform the School Office either by email, telephone, note, or in person as soon as they know their child will be absent from school. They should also ensure that they provide correct and updated contact information on a regular basis and know the procedures for handover of their child at the beginning and end of sessions.
- If a parent / carer takes a pupil out of school during the day, they must sign them out at the School Office, providing a reason for the absence. The School Secretary then updates the school's electronic register with this information.
- It is the responsibility of Governors to ensure they are aware of the school's procedures and to challenge / support the school in its review of this policy.
- It is the responsibility of any adult leading an afterschool club to complete the register provided by the School Secretary.

3. Procedures Aimed at Reducing Risk of a Missing Pupil

3.1 Start of the school day:

- The school gates are opened at 8.30am by the member of staff responsible and / or the Head teacher / Deputy, who remain at the front of the school until 9am.
- Parents are responsible for their children until their children enter the school building for the start of the school day at 8.30am-8.45am, unless they are booked into Breakfast Club, or any other before school provision.
Children should therefore not arrive at school until the school doors open at 8.30am, at which time they should go straight in to their classrooms, where their class teachers will assume responsibility for them.
- There are clear procedures for welcoming pupils into school. Teachers are in their classrooms from 8:30 am.
- Class teachers, or those undertaking the duty of class teacher, complete Attendance Registers. They must be completed accurately and promptly according to guidelines and returned to the school office
- The School Secretary oversees the Attendance Registers and records any absences in on the school's electronic system along with the reason for absence. If a child is absent from school without a reason provided, the School Secretary makes contact with the child's parent(s) / carer(s) to verify the absence immediately. If the parent / carer cannot be contacted on the first day of an absence from school, the School Secretary will alert the school's Education Welfare Officer by email.
- The school gates are closed at 9:00 am. Before locking the gates, the member of staff will undertake a thorough 'sweep' the playground and the corridors and toilets to ensure all children are in session.
- After 9am pupils report to the main school office via the main entrance, where they must be signed in by a responsible adult.
- If a child's whereabouts cannot be established and safeguarding concerns are raised, the DSL will contact Kent Children's Services and/or the Police immediately. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will also be informed and Kent CME referral procedures followed.
- The school will ensure that at least two emergency contacts are held for every pupil and that reasonable enquiries are made before a child is removed from roll, in line with statutory guidance.
- All CME concerns, actions, and referrals will be recorded on the school's safeguarding system and retained in accordance with the school's data protection policy and the Kent Record Retention Schedule.
- Governors will receive regular safeguarding updates, which will include anonymised information on attendance, persistent absence, and CME cases, to support oversight and challenge.

3.2 During session time:

- Staff must ensure that the external gates to any outside area are closed when pupils are playing outside. The exception is the main car park gate, from which there is no access to the school playgrounds.
- If pupils leave the classroom to work in other parts of the school, the class teacher must ensure that adequate supervision is maintained at all times and all pupils are accounted for on return to the classroom.
- If a parent / carer takes a pupil out of school during the day, they must sign them out at the School Office, providing a reason for the absence. The School Secretary then updates the school's electronic register with this information.

3.3 During Break times

- Duty staff should be on the playground before pupils come out.
- External gates remain closed. Staff patrol all areas in the playground throughout the play session.
- Senior Leadership Team members are available at lunchtime.

3.4 At the end of the school day

- The gates are opened at 2.50pm by the designated member of staff.
- Pupils leave by assigned exits.
- Children who are not collected go back to their class to wait with a member of staff while their parents / carers are contacted.

3.5 Educational visits:

- Thorough risk assessments and adequate staff / pupil ratios (at least following national guidance and often in excess of this) are provided when pupils leave the school premises. Permission from parents is obtained generically for local area visits within walking distance on admission and once again specifically for each trip outside of walking distance.
- Mobile telephones are taken on every visit and mobile contact numbers left at school.

3.6 After School Clubs:

- Thorough risk assessments are in place.
- A register of pupils is taken at the beginning of each session and missing pupils accounted for.

3.7 In the unlikely event of a child going missing in / from school:

- **Staff will follow the emergency lost child procedure outlined in Appendix 1**

4 Children missing in education

- As outlined above, it is the School Secretary's responsibility to oversee the Attendance Registers and record any absences in on the school's electronic system along with the reason for absence. If a child is absent from school without a reason provided, it is the School Secretary's responsibility to make contact with the child's parent(s) / carer(s) to verify the absence immediately. If the parent / carer cannot be contacted on the first day of an absence from school, the School Secretary will alert the school's Education Welfare Officer by email.
- The school will then liaise with the school's Education Welfare Officer in accordance with the Local Authority's procedure, which is available via this link
[https://www.learn-together.org.uk/Resources/Documents/Children%20Missing%20from%20Education%20Policy%20September%202015%20\(11.1\).pdf](https://www.learn-together.org.uk/Resources/Documents/Children%20Missing%20from%20Education%20Policy%20September%202015%20(11.1).pdf)

5. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or if a situation occurs which necessitates any amendment.

