



The Boston Witham Academies Federation

Children Missing in Education Policy

Definition of Children Missing Education

For the purpose of this document a child missing education is defined as:

Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, privately, or in alternative provision) and who has been out of any education provision for a substantial period of time (practice nationally is four weeks).

The process of looking for learners who are absent from the academy and their whereabouts are unknown starts as soon as the academy has sufficient evidence to confirm this. Usually on day three of an absence and where no contact has been made with the family to ascertain the reason for the learner's absence.

Definition of Children at Risk of Missing Education

Children and young people with poor school attendance are often the most vulnerable and are more likely to become children missing from education.

It is the responsibility of the academy to ensure a learner attends school once they are on the school roll. A learner is not considered to be a CME whilst the academy has knowledge that the learner remains in the area and the academy remains the nearest available, however learners can still be logged with the Local Authority if a learner is absent for 10 consecutive days and where the academy have had contact with the family.

For the purpose of this document a Child at Risk of Missing Education is defined as:

Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is on roll of a school but has less than 50% attendance in a school term

Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is subject to a modified/reduced timetable for more than one school term.

Children on less than 25 hours education are reported on a monthly basis via Children Services Performance Data. This information is recorded through:

<https://lccdataexchange.lincolnshire.gov.uk/less-than-25-hourseducation/2237.article>

The academy is required to input details of any learner who is in receipt of less than 25 hours education. For any learner who is on a reduced timetable without an assessment, the Local Authority will contact the academy to look at what support can be offered.

Why children go missing from education

Children and young people can go missing from school or agreed education provision for a wide variety of reasons. Their personal circumstances or those of their families may contribute to the withdrawal process. Children can go missing when there is no systematic process in place to identify them and ensure they re-engage with appropriate provision.

The most common reasons why children miss education include:

- Failing to register at school at age five
- Failing to make successful transition from infant to junior and primary to secondary
- Cease to attend, due to exclusion (formal withdrawal)
- Mid-year transfer of school
- Unable to find a school place after moving into the Local Authority
- Victims of bullying
- Frequent moves of house including periods of homelessness or periods in a refuge
- Transience/ family mobility
- Family breakdown
- Frequent absence leading to low attendance (especially Year 10 and Year 11)
- Disaffection resulting in parents withdrawing the learner
- Involvement in youth offending

Certain vulnerable groups are more likely to be affected by the factors listed, these are:

- Young people who have committed offences
- Children living in women's refuges
- Children of troubled families i.e. suffering bereavement, trauma, domestic abuse, homelessness etc.
- Young runaways
- Children with special educational needs
- Refugee and asylum seeking children
- Travelling families

- Looked after children
- Teenage parenthood
- Children with mental health
- Young carers
- Children who are permanently excluded from school
- Young people being forced into marriage
- Young people victims of female genital mutilation
- Child trafficking
- Young people involved in substance misuse

The local authority records all children who are not in suitable education as Children Missing in Education. Within this wide category, children can be in one of the following:

- Location of child unknown
- Child referred from other authority, child possibly within the local authority borders
- Location of child known but not in education
- Child returned to education but at risk of missing education in near future
- Child returned to education through school attendance order

The role of Schools and Academies

Schools and academies have a duty under section 10 of the Children's Act 2004 to work in partnership with the Local Authority with a view to improving the wellbeing of children in the authority's area.

Section 175 of the Education Act puts a duty on all schools to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This includes identifying children who are not receiving education.

By the time a learner has been absent from the academy for five consecutive days and where we have had no contact with the family we will have carried out all reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of the learner and engaging them in education. This will include text and telephone contact, email, unannounced home visits including visits to neighbours where appropriate, contact with staff and external agencies that may be involved with the family. Once complete and on day five of the learner's absence a risk assessment and Child Missing in Education log is completed, the Local Authority will be notified via the Lincolnshire County Council Data Exchange that the learner is missing education.

When a learner has not returned to the academy 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school for 20 consecutive days they will be removed from our roll as per Regulation 8 (1), paragraphs f and h (iii) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016.

Sharing information with the Local Authority

The academy will notify the Local Authority through the Lincolnshire County Council Data Exchange when a learner's name is to be removed from the admissions register at a non-standard transition point as per Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016.

We will notify the Local Authority of:

- The full name of the learner
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the learner lives
- At least one telephone number of the parent with whom the learner lives
- The full name and address of the parent who the learner is going to live with, and the date the learner is expected to start living there, if applicable
- The name of the learner's destination school and the learner's expected start date there, if applicable, and
- The grounds in Regulation 8 under which the learner's name is to be removed.

Using Common Transfer Files to transfer learner information

The Department for Education provide a secure internet system – school2school – to allow schools to transfer learners' information to another school when a learner moves.

When a learner leaves the academy, this includes those learners defined as a Child Missing in Education, the academy will upload the common transfer file of learners who have left but their destination, next school, is unknown, or the learner has moved abroad or transferred to a non-maintained school. If learners arrive in a school and the previous school is unknown, the academy will contact the Local Authority who will be able to search the database.

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