

Children Missing from Education

Introduction

This policy and guidance provides an outline of John Whitgift Academy's system and procedures for identifying, registering and tracking students at risk of going missing from education.

- This guidance has been produced in accordance with North East Lincolnshire Children Missing Education Policy, March 2017
- It supports the academy to fulfil its obligations in relation to S175 of the Education Act 2002.
- It supports Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004 which includes various provisions relating to safeguarding and promotion of welfare of children.
- It supports Section 436A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 which requires all local authorities to make arrangements to enable them to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children residing in their area who are not receiving a suitable education.
- It supports the requirements of Statutory Instrument 2006 No 1751 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and Statutory Instrument No 792 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016.
- It supports and works alongside North East Lincolnshire Authority's 'Children and Young People who go Missing from Care and Home'.
- It supports the Single Assessment Framework procedures in North East Lincolnshire.
- It supports John Whitgift Academy Child Protection Policy July 2016

Definition of Children Missing from Education

Children missing from education in this document refers to all children of compulsory school age who are not on school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in alternative provision). It also refers to any child whose name will be deleted from a school admissions register (after the school and local authority have made reasonable enquiry to locate the child before the decision is made): because they have continuous unauthorised absence from school for a period of 20 school days; leave a school and future provision is unknown; fails to return from extended leave within 10 school days.

Why Children go Missing from Education

Children go missing from the education system because they:

- Fail to complete transition at Key Stage 2 to 3 (Primary to Secondary)
- Medical reasons
- Cease to attend due to unofficial exclusion
- Are withdrawn by parent/carer
- Are electively home educated
- Transfer between local authorities
- Are transient and traveller families
- Arrive in the country via asylum, refugee status or as EU nationals

- Permanent exclusion
- Fail to attend alternative provision or work placements
- Cease to attend for an unknown reason

Aims and Objectives

John Whitgift Academy strives to ensure that every student registered at the academy has the opportunity to fulfil their potential and to ensure that no child or young person slips through the net.

This will be achieved by:

- Continuing to develop awareness in all staff of the need for Child Protection (particular care should be taken towards children with disabilities and SEN and looked after children) and their responsibilities to report any concerns regarding non-attendance
- Monitoring children who have low school attendance or absences of concern
- Investigating all unexplained absences on the first day of absence
- Reporting attendance concerns and Children Missing from Education to the relevant agency
- Ensuring that outside agencies are involved where appropriate
- Creating an environment where children feel secure, have their viewpoints valued, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

Process for Monitoring Pupils who cease to Attend

The statutory duties under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016 requires that all education providers must begin enquiries as to the whereabouts of the child and family within 10 school days or sooner. If enquiries do not locate the child and resolve the issue a referral should be made to the North East Lincolnshire Education Welfare Service. (The timescale for the referral should be not later than 20 school days or unauthorised absence or sooner, depending on the particular circumstances of the child)

The child must remain on the school register until all reasonable enquiries are completed even if this means that the child will amass more than 20 days absence. The outcome of the school and local authority's attempts to trace the child will dictate the next steps. If they are unable to find the child they must refer the case to the appropriate agencies. The school after consultation with the authority's Education Welfare Service should enter the appropriate cessation date to remove the child from the school's register.

Referral Routes

The academy will refer children missing from education to North East Lincolnshire School Admissions and/or Education Welfare service on the following criteria:

- Child does not register at the academy at transition from Primary to Secondary School (Key Stage 2 to 3).
- Child does not appear at the academy following an in-year admission or transfer

- Child ceases to attend and has unauthorised absences for 10 sessions and there has been no or limited contact from parents/carers
- Child has a substantial amount of unauthorised absence with no evidence provided for non-attendance
- Child not attending alternative provision whilst on the academy's roll
- Child has been permanently excluded
- Child educated other than at school, i.e. elective home education.

Investigating absence

All academy staff must report any concerns regarding student absences, known reasons for non-attendance, information regarding possible school transfers and change of address to the attendance team in a timely manner. The attendance team are Miss S Dobson and Mrs J Chard.

The designated teacher for Child Protection is Vice Principal, Miss C Glaves and in her absence Mrs J Rimmer. If both Miss Glaves and Mrs Rimmer are unavailable child protection concerns should then be referred to the Principal, Mr Spendlow.

The academy will respond to substantial periods of absence and/or absences of concern by the following means

- Parents/carers will be contacted by telephone, text messages and letters in order to request information regarding absences.
- The academy will request written medical evidence for absences where appropriate
- Home visits to parents/carers will be made in response to absences
- Parents/carers to be invited to attendance meetings to establish reasons for absence and identify any appropriate support needed to improve attendance
- Attendance staff will liaise with the academy safeguarding team, children's services, named social workers, school nursing team, other academies, benefits agency, housing, health, youth offending service, the police and other agencies regarding absences of concern
- The academy may request police welfare checks for unexplained absences of 2 or more consecutive school days.
- The academy will report unexplained absences of 10 consecutive sessions to the Local Authority
- Where a parent/carer has opted for Elective Home Education (EHE) for their child, the academy will inform the Education Welfare Service of this in a timely manner and provide a copy of the EHE letter
- The academy will inform North East Lincolnshire School Admissions regarding students transferring to another academy within North East Lincolnshire. The academy will contact the designated school to confirm that the student has registered with them before removing the student from the academy's roll
- Where a student transfers to a school out of area, the academy will contact North East Lincolnshire School Admissions to provide information regarding the designated school

and change of address and contact details via an SA5 form. Additionally, the academy will liaise with other Local Authority CME teams and other academies, regarding students who have moved out of area, where appropriate

- Daily contact regarding attendance for Dual Registered students is requested from the alternative provision or academy
- Children who have been permanently excluded from the academy are reported to North East Lincolnshire's Behaviour Service
- If a child subject to a Child Protection Plan goes missing, the Child Protection Co-ordinator must be informed immediately.
- If a Looked After Child goes missing, the named Social Worker for the case must be informed immediately
- If a Child in Need goes missing, the named Social Worker for the case must be informed immediately
- Children with a Traveller Background and or from Transient Families – The academy will work with North East Lincolnshire Education Welfare Service and The Schools Admissions/Children Missing from Education Team to ensure that traveller children and those from other transient backgrounds gain access to their legal entitlement to an education that meets their needs and promotes the inclusion and achievement of such children to enable them to become independent users of the education system.