

St. John the Evangelist Catholic Academy

Part of the Newman Catholic Collegiate



Child Missing Education Policy

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St. John the Evangelist Catholic Academy



Child Missing Education Policy

At St. John the Evangelist Catholic Academy we work closely with the children, parents and the community to ensure that all the children have the very best start in life and are kept safe.

1. Responsibilities

It is the Principal'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 timely basis. It is the responsibility of all staff to read the policy and act at all times according to its guidance.

This policy is based upon the model policy provided by Staffordshire Local authority:

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Intranet www.staffordshire.gov.uk/childrenmissingeducation

Email cme.referrals@staffordshire.gov.uk CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION POLICY

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CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION POLICY

Under Review

ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

- Capita ONE - pupil database used by Staffordshire County Council.
- CME - Children Missing Education
- DFE - Department for Education
- EHE - Elective Home Education/Electively Home Educated. The term used to describe education provided by parents or carers to their children instead of sending them to school or other suitable provision.
- LA - Local Authority
- LST - Local Support Team. There are currently 19 teams based in the eight district councils of Staffordshire.
- Schools - the generic term used to describe institutions in which statutory school-aged children receive education. These can also be known as academies or colleges, and can be in the state or independent sectors.

Under Review

1 INTRODUCTION

All professionals working with children, as well as the wider community can help by remaining vigilant to children's safety. The law states every child should be receiving an education, and we stand a better chance of ensuring a child's safety if we know where and how they are receiving this.

If the academy knows of any child who is not receiving an education, or knows of a child who has gone missing from a school, or is in any doubt contact will be made with:

Children Missing Education,
Staffordshire County Council,
2 Staffordshire Place,
Tipping Street,
Stafford
ST16 2DH
Telephone: 01785 278999 or 895966
Email: cme.referrals@staffordshire.gov.uk

However if there is a concern about a child's safety i.e.

- a serious concern about the safety of a child
- a child is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed
- there is a concern that a child is living in circumstances where they are treated badly and not cared for properly then First Response will be contacted:

First Response: 0800 13 13 126

Office hours: 8.30 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Thursday; and 8.30 am to 4.30 pm Friday

Email: frist@staffordshire.gov.uk

The DFE document "Working Together to Safeguard Children - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children" which was originally published in March 2010, and revised in 2013 and 2015 says *"There is a Children Missing Education (CME) named point of contact in every Local Authority. Every practitioner working with a child has a responsibility to inform their CME contact if they know or suspect that a child is not receiving education. To help local agencies and professionals find children who are missing from education and identify those that are at risk of going missing from education, guidance was issued in July 2004, identifying and maintaining contact with children missing, or at risk of going missing, from education."*

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2 CONTEXT

The DFE defines CME as:

'All children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in an alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually four weeks or more)'

This definition is adopted in this CME Policy, with an understanding that EHE is a valid alternative provision.

St. John the Evangelist Catholic Academy acknowledges that it has a responsibility to promote the educational achievement of all children registered on its roll.

The Children Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the welfare of children and to share information appropriately. This principle underpins this policy, and there is an expectation that all agencies and professionals will work together to ensure that children are participating in education, whether at an educational provision or at home.

There are certain points at which children are most at risk of becoming missing from education, and the most common reasons for this include:

□ Children not registered by parents/carers at school when they achieve compulsory school age;

- Children not registered at school for the start of high school (Year 7)
- Frequent house moves, periods of homelessness or time spent in refuges
- Family breakdown
- Parents "withdrawing" children from school for an invalid reason
- Schools off-rolling pupils without the correct checks and procedures being followed
- Exclusion (lawful and unlawful)
- Children whose educational status is unknown, and it is therefore not possible to identify whether the child is receiving a suitable education

Certain groups of children are more likely to be affected by the factors listed above and include:

- Children in Public Care (Looked After Children)
- Children who have been the subject of a Child Protection Plan.
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families
- Children who have experienced domestic violence or other adverse family circumstances
- Children with special educational needs
- Migrant families
- Children who have had attendance difficulties

Missing out on learning is also linked to other problems in later life including:

- Unemployment
- Homelessness
- Criminal and anti-social behaviour
- Involvement in prostitution and the sex trade
- Substance abuse
- Teenage parenthood
- Mental health and self-esteem issues
- Physical health issues (including those linked to poverty)
- Forced marriage

CME works with the Virtual School Headteacher and a range of professionals to ensure that there are effective arrangements in place to support the education of looked after children. This includes ensuring that there is timely communication and effective cooperation with other local authorities in relation to education placement changes, school admissions, achievement and exclusions.

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4 THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS

When a child is expected to join a school and does not arrive, the school should

- initially try to contact the parents/carers by telephone or letter to find out why.
- If, after one week this has not been successful, the school should contact the School Admissions Team to establish if the child has been registered elsewhere.
- If the child is not found to be on roll elsewhere, the school should contact their LST to investigate.
- If after four school weeks (20 school days) the child has not been located, the school should complete and submit a CME Referral Form to cme.referrals@staffordshire.gov.uk. Once the referral is acknowledged by the CME team, the child can be removed from roll.
- If a child is absent from school for a prolonged period, or fails to return from an agreed holiday, the school should follow their normal procedures for investigating the absence. If this is not successful, an Early Help Assessment request can be made to the LST for them to investigate further.
- If a child is absent from school because they are believed to have moved away, and parents and emergency contacts cannot be reached, the school should contact their LST.
- When the LST has investigated, but not located the child and four school weeks (20 school days) have elapsed, schools should complete and submit a CME Referral Form to cme.referrals@staffordshire.gov.uk. Once the referral is acknowledged by the CME team, the child can be removed from roll.
- If there is a concern regarding the immediate safety of the child First Response must be contacted. Dependent on the level of concern, the Education Safeguarding Officer can also be consulted via the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board.
- It is the decision of the Principal of the school as to when to remove a child from roll; however deletions from a school roll can usually be made after four school weeks (20 school days) continuous absence where all reasonable attempts have been made to trace a child and the CME team have been notified. In these circumstances the child's details should also be uploaded onto the Teachernet s2s lost pupils database
- There is statutory guidance governing when schools can delete children from their admissions register. These are outlined in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

- **When a child is deleted from the school's admissions register, the school should update their school management information system and clearly indicate the date and the reason for removal from roll. On the "i" tab next to "Reason for Leaving" the new school's name should be given together with its seven digit school identifier number (English and Welsh schools) or the school name and locality (Scottish, Northern Irish, Isle of Man, Channel Islands, Armed Forces or Gibraltarian schools).**
- When the new school is unknown, the "Reason for Leaving" on the school management information system should be amended to show "Unknown Destination". The Common Transfer File must also be completed, and coded XXXXXXXX (destination unknown) or MMMMMMM (moved to independent sector or out of England and Wales). It can then be uploaded onto s2s in the normal way. These records are securely stored in an area of s2s known as the Lost Pupils Database. If a file is rejected, schools should recode the file MMMMMMM.
- When a child leaves a school for a known destination, the school should upload the child's records to s2s - a secure national database. This generates an email to the receiving school which then downloads the information.
- Where a child leaves a school *without* a known destination, the school should upload the child's records to a secure area of s2s known as the Lost Pupils Database. Any school then admitting the child without previous school history can request their LA to search the Lost Pupils Database for the child's records. At this point the CME team should also be notified (see above).
- Schools should pay particular attention to the section entitled "School Responsibilities" regarding notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity for those children who move onto and off school rolls at non-standard transition points. Please also give regard to the section entitled "Making reasonable enquiries".

5 ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

- If a parent wishes to EHE his/her school educated child, the school will deregister the child at the point written notification is received from the parent stating that the child is now in receipt of home education. Deletion from the admissions register will take place as soon as such notification is received.
- The academy will be responsible for informing the EHE team when a child has been de-registered to be home educated.

6 RELATED LEGISLATION AND USEFUL LINKS

- Children Act 2004
- Children Missing Education - DfE Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 1996 s436A
- Education Act 1996 s437
- Education Act 2002
- Education Act 2002 s175
- Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 Regulation 8
- Every Child Matters 2003
- Families First
- Local Authority Attendance guidance
- Local Authority Elective Home Education guidance
- Local Authority Fair Access Protocol
- Promoting the Education of Looked After Children - Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities, DfE July 2014
- School Attendance Order
- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board
- Teachernet s2s lost pupils database.

Appendix 1

Missing Child Report Form

Name of pupil:			
Date of incident:			
Time of incident:			
Location of incident:			
Which staff/children were in the group to which the missing child belonged:			
When the missing child was last seen:			
Circumstances surrounding the child's disappearance - what was the child doing/saying prior to going missing:			
Time	Action	Outcome	Signature