



MISSING STUDENT POLICY

Approved by	Local Governing Committee
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1. Policy Statement

We want all our students to be everything they can be and everything they are meant to be – to be able to live life in all its fullness (John 10.10).

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered students at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education is a safeguarding risk. As a school, we have a relentless focus on attendance (see Attendance Policy) both for educational and safeguarding reasons. All children are entitled to a full-time education, regardless of their circumstances. Children missing education (CME) risk underachieving, being victims of abuse, and not being in education, employment or training (NEET). We are mindful that some children may be more vulnerable and likely to be missing from education (see Child Protection and Safeguarding policy) and we ensure that our absence monitoring procedures focus on these children first. We understand that children are rendered more vulnerable to risk when they are out of education and, as such, only fixed term suspend when it is absolutely necessary and permanently exclude when there is no alternative. For vulnerable children, we will do all we can to provide an alternative to fixed-term suspension.

The Local Authority has a legal duty to identify when there are CME and to work with schools to help them back into education. This policy highlights what our academies within our Trust will do to support our children and to work with Children's Services to fulfil its duty.

2. Objectives of this policy

- To outline how we ensure any student who is potentially missing from education is identified as soon as possible to minimise any risk of harm.
- To document our systems for notifying appropriate staff and outside agencies if we suspect a student is missing from education.
- To explain how school systems are updated promptly once it is established that a student will not be returning to school.

3. Circumstances under which policy applies

Oldham Council is notified of all students missing for 10 days. Where a student has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or have been absent without authorisation for 20 consecutive days, the student can be removed from the school admission register, even if it has been impossible to establish the whereabouts of the child. The school must notify the local authority when a student's name is to be removed from the admissions register as soon as the grounds for removal is met.

The withdrawal categories used by the Council are outlined in full in Appendix A(i) and (ii): 'Admission and Withdrawal Categories'. This policy is concerned with the following sections of the document:

- Left the area (without new address)
- Not returned from leave approved in advance
- Leave taken which has not been granted in advance

Some examples of scenarios in which this policy would be followed are outlined below:

- Student does not start school in September as anticipated and no notification is received by the school
- Student stops attending school and no explanation for this is received by the school
- Student does not return from a family holiday on the anticipated date and no notification is received

- School receives information that a student will no longer be attending school, e.g. from another student

It is expected that the school makes ‘reasonable enquiries’ to establish the whereabouts of a child jointly with the local authority before deleting them from the school roll enabling schools to act on a case-by-case basis. Examples contained in the statutory guidance include checking with parents, relatives and neighbours, checking with agencies known to be involved with the family and conducting home visits.

4. Procedure

If at any stage a member of staff has reason to believe a missing child is in immediate danger, they should notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. The Safeguarding Lead will contact the relevant Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team and, where appropriate, the police.

Day 1	Contact parents/carers by telephone to confirm a student’s absence, the reason for this absence and the expected date of return. This will take place between 8.15 – 9.30
Day 2	If a student is still absent and we have been unable to speak to a student’s parent/carer on day 1 a further attempt to contact parents is made
Day 3	If a student is still absent and we have been unable to speak to a student’s parent/carer our Senior Pastoral Officer/Attendance Officer/ Pastoral Officer will undertake a home visit to find out the nature of the absence
Day 4	Attendance Officer continues to contact all known numbers
Day 5	Attendance Officer / member of the Pastoral Team visits home address and if no-one is home, attempts to speak to immediate neighbours and hand-delivers a letter requesting that parents contact school immediately to inform parents that their child’s continued absence is a safeguarding concern and that their child will be off-rolled after 20 days of non-attendance. Attendance Officer sends a copy of this letter to the Missing in Education Team at Oldham Council.
Day 6-9	Attendance Officer continues to contact all known numbers daily and make home visits
Day 10	Attendance Officer completes Missing Student Form and sends to the Missing In Education Team, along with details of school investigations.
Day 20	If the student doesn’t return to school, Attendance Officer informs Data Manager and other key staff that the student can be off-rolled as well as the Admissions Secretary, so the details can be recorded on the weekly Admissions and Withdrawals return to the local authority.

[Children Missing Education Policy 2023 | Oldham Council](#)

[Report a child missing from school form - Oldham Council](#)

When a student leaves the school, the admission register must record the name of the student’s new school and expected start date.

When notifying the local authority that a student’s name is being deleted from the admissions register the school must provide:

- Name, address & contact number of the parent with whom the student lives
- Name and start date of the student’s destination school (if applicable)
- The grounds for deletion from the admissions register
- Any contextual information (e.g. safeguarding concerns)

Any information the school has been unable to obtain should also be highlighted. The Local Authority 'Overview of Missing Student Process' is shown as Appendix A(iii)

Appendix A (i) Student Registration Regulations – Withdrawal Categories

Schools/academies should only 'off roll' 'delete' in one of the below circumstances.

STUDENTS CIRCUMSTANCES	Code	FURTHER ACTION FOR SCHOOL
<p>Admission to another school Student has been admitted to another school and the previous school have had confirmation they have started.</p>	1	Send Common Transfer File (CTF) to new school. Admission & Withdrawal (A&W) form to LA.
<p>Left the area (with new address) School has become inaccessible Student has left Oldham with a confirmed address (but has not been admitted to another school) or has emigrated.</p>	2a	Send CTF to new LA or to the Lost Student Database (LPD) if they have left the country. A&W form to LA. Complete notification form that a child/young person has left the country.
<p>Left the area Missing Students Student has left their address and they are 'missing'. These students cannot be off rolled until the missing student procedures have been followed.</p>	2b	Once the student has been 'missing' for 20 school days (and the LA has had the missing student form with evidence that investigations have taken place) student can be off rolled. CTF to be sent to LPD.
<p>Not returned from Approved Leave Student has not returned from leave that HAS been agreed with school.</p>	3a	The student has failed to return to school 10 days after the agreed return date. Provide LA with evidence of reasonable investigations (i.e. home visit log, parental letter, and contact with possible agencies that are involved). Confirm with Education Attendance Service that the student can be off rolled. CTF to be sent to LPD.
<p>Unauthorised Leave Student has taken leave not agreed with school.</p>	3b	The student has taken leave which has not been granted and not returned within 20 school days. Provide LA with evidence of reasonable investigations (i.e. home visit log, parental letter, and contact with possible agencies that are involved). Confirm with Education Attendance Service that the student can be off rolled. CTF to be sent to LPD.
<p>Permanent Exclusion Student has been Permanently Excluded AND their deadline for appeal has been reached.</p>	4	Send CTF to new school, Kingsland School or LA (353LLLL) if no school confirmed.
<p>Education otherwise than in school Student is to be educated at home or otherwise than in a school. Parents must put this in writing to school.</p>	5	School must notify the LA of all requests to educate at home or otherwise than in a school. CTF to go to the LPD.
<p>Deceased student Local Authority to be informed 0161 770 1648.</p>	6	No further action from school.

Medical Reasons School have been provided with medical evidence stating that the student is not well enough to attend school before ceasing to be statutory school age. Copy of evidence needs to be sent to LA asap BEFORE off rolling.	7	Send CTF to LA (353LLLL).
In Custody Student has been detained in custody for more than 4 months. School to discuss with LA BEFORE off rolling.	8	Send CTF to LA (353LLLL).
Student has a School Attendance Order (SAO) naming a particular school and the SAO is then revoked on the grounds arrangements have been made to educate otherwise than at school.	9	No further action.
Student has a School Attendance Order (SAO) naming a particular school and the SAO is then revoked on the grounds arrangements have been made to admit the student to another school.	10	No further action.
Student is registered at more than one school and a mutual decision is made to delete registration at one of the schools.	11	No further action.
Students that cease to be of compulsory school age.	12	No further action.
Students that cease to be a student at the school (not including maintained schools, academies, CTC, UTC).	13	No further action.
Where a student has been admitted to the nursery provision of the school and does not continue into the reception class.	14	No further action.
Where a student is a boarder at a maintained school or an academy and has failed to pay for chargeable board and lodging and those charges remain unpaid at the end of the school term they relate to.	15	No further action.
<i>Any registered students at special schools cannot be removed from the admission register of that school without the consent of the Local Authority</i>		
The Vulnerable Groups Officer (CME Team) are available on 0161 770 4201 / 3665. The Education Attendance Service are available on 0161 770 6620.		

Appendix A (ii) – Admission and withdrawal procedures

Step 1	School must complete an admission and withdrawal form for every new addition and every deletion from the school's register.
Step 2	Schools must inform the LA of every new starter and every deletion within 5 school days. To be sent via email to ecs.pupils@oldham.gov.uk .
Step 3	All admission and withdrawal forms must be complete, giving full details of the pupil, current/previous addresses, current/previous schools, parental contact details and destinations.
Step 4	If any pupil is taken off the school register for the reason code 2b, the missing pupil procedures must be followed and evidenced. School investigation evidence will also be needed for code 3a and 3b. For any pupil that has left the county, schools must complete the notification form.

Appendix A (iii) – Missing student procedures/checklist

Guide to school actions for a student whose whereabouts are unknown (Missing Students) – **Code 2b**

Step 1	Try all phone numbers including family contacts to try and confirm a new address. If there are siblings at another local school contact that school.
Step 2	If family or pupil are considered to be vulnerable, contact agencies involved with the family i.e. MASH, Health, Police.
Step 3	Home visit to last known address to be conducted by School-Based Attendance Officer or linked LA Attendance Officer.
Step 4	School to complete Missing Pupil Form and send to LA once all the above is done (2 weeks from missing date).

Following the completion of the above, the Access Service will undertake the task of ‘tracking’ the student. This will include checks on benefits /council tax/ health etc. as well as contacting other boroughs. It is essential the above is completed before the missing student form is sent in.

Vulnerable Groups Officer (CME team) are on 0161 770 4201/3665 cme@oldham.gov.uk

Education Attendance Service (EAS team) are on 0161 770 6620 sais@oldham.gov.uk