

# Horton Lodge Community Special School

‘Working hand in hand to achieve potential’



## Child Absent from Education Policy

**Approved by:**

**Date:**

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## 1. Introduction

A child who is absent from education can become a child missing in education if they are removed from their school's register. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 states that children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation – particularly county lines. In addition, KCSIE 2023 states that being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community. It could be considered that this is an increased concern for the children at Horton Lodge in view of their special needs and for many their inability to verbalise any concerns that they have about missing out on school.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have (Children Missing in Education, Sept 2016).

The Local Authority (LA) has a legal duty to identify when there are CME and help them back into education. This policy highlights what Horton Lodge will do to help the LA with its duty. The Staffordshire LA Policy can be found at:

[Children Missing Education policy: March 2019 - Staffordshire County Council](#)

At Horton Lodge we have robust policies and procedures for safeguarding children which includes children absent from or missing education. We monitor attendance through the daily register and use the information to address poor or irregular attendance, refer poor attendance to the LA and thoroughly investigate any unexplained absences as part of our wider safeguarding duties. We keep our admissions register accurate and up-to-date and remind parents to inform us of any changes to their information. We hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil, where this is possible. The register is amended as soon as changes to our roll are made. We understand that the cost of children missing out on education can be very high – to themselves, their families and society as a whole. For our children, among other things missing out on learning can be linked to problems in later life including mental health and self-esteem issues and physical health issues.

Lucy Bloor (Headteacher) is responsible for admissions, attendance and Looked After Children.

Geraldine Fallows (Deputy Head) is the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## 2. Definition

Children absent from education: children who are persistently absent (absent repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods).

Children missing education: children of compulsory school age who aren't registered pupils at a school and aren't receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school

## 3. Children at particular risk of missing education

There are many reasons why children can be missing or absent from education. Some never start school when they reach the statutory age, others simply disappear without anyone advising the present school of a destination and some fail to register with a new school when they move into the county. Whilst at Horton Lodge we understand that there are many reasons the following are those that are of most concern to us;



- Pupils at risk of harm or neglect – where this is suspected, local child protection procedures will be followed; however, if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made immediately to children’s social care as per our safeguarding procedures. The LA officers responsible for CME will check a referral has been made and will contact children’s social care if this is not the case. Should there be a reason to suspect a crime has been committed or the child’s safety is at risk, the LA will contact the police.
- Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveler (GRT) families – when a GRT pupil leaves school without naming their next destination school, the school will contact the relevant traveler teacher in the first instance and then the Local Authority if this becomes necessary.
- Children who ceased to attend Horton Lodge – where the reason for a child who has stopped attending the school is not known, this will be closely monitored through our safeguarding procedures and if necessary, this will include involving the LA SEND team.

#### **4. Staffordshire County Council state that:**

Please ensure that you refer to their full guidance at the above link for more detail information.

1. The Department for Education guidance “Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities September 2016” sets out the key principles to enable local authorities in England to implement their legal duty under section [436A of the Education Act 1996](#) to make arrangements to identify, as far as it is possible to do so, children missing education (CME). This document is followed by the Local Authority in its delivery of the above duties.

2. If you know of any child who is not receiving an education, or you know of a child who has gone missing from a school, or are in any doubt please contact:

Children Missing Education  
Staffordshire County Council  
Staffordshire Place  
Tipping Street  
Stafford  
ST16 2DH  
Telephone: 01785 278999

Email: [cme.referrals@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cme.referrals@staffordshire.gov.uk)

[www.staffordshire.gov.uk/childrenmissingeducation](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/childrenmissingeducation)

Refer to this link for more information [Leaflet-Printed-version-Final-0912.pdf \(staffordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

#### **5. The role of the school**

##### New Starters

Horton Lodge will ensure that pupils are entered on the admission register at the beginning of the first day in which we have agreed, or been notified that a pupil will attend our school. If a child fails to attend on the agreed/notified date, we will try to establish contact with the parent/carer to establish the child’s whereabouts. We will also check with agencies known to be involved with the family and/or check the original LA/ school that the child has moved from. We will make contact were possible. If we are unsuccessful in our enquiries, we will talk directly to the LA SEND team.

When a pupil is added to the register at a non-standard transition point (i.e. at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school), we as a school will:



- Notify the LA within five days
- Provide the LA with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil

### Recording Data

At Horton Lodge, we ensure that the school's admission register (SIMS) is accurate and kept up to date. As a school we:

- Encourage parents to inform us of any changes that occur by sending out letters and communicating with parents on a regular basis.
- Where possible hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

When changes do occur, we as a school will record on the admission register (SIMS):

- The full name of the parent with whom the pupil live;
- The new address; and
- The date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Children missing education (Sept 2016) [Stat guidance template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

### When pupils leave for another school

Where a parent of a pupil notifies school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, we will record in the admission register:

- The name of the new school; and
- The date when the pupil first attended or is due to start attending that school.

When a pupil leaves, we will send a common transfer file (CTF) to the pupil's new school.

When a pupil leaves the school, but their destination school is unknown, or the pupil is moving abroad or to an independent school, we will upload the CTF to the 'lost pupil database' in the DfE's school2school system.

[School to school \(S2S\) data transfer system: guides - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

We will only remove a pupil from our admission register at a non-standard transition point for **any of the reasons set out in Section 8 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** with the joint agreement of the LA.

### Monitoring Attendance

Lucy Bloor, our head teacher is supported to closely monitor attendance and is supported in this through teacher input and information provided daily from SIMS by our administration team in accordance with our whole school Attendance Policy.

## **6. The role of our parents/carers**

- Parents have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive suitable full-time education. Some parents may elect to educate their children at home and must follow the guidance from the LA which is developed from [Elective home education: departmental guidance for local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- Children with an EHCP can be home educated. However this can only be the case after the LA have assured itself that the provision being provided is suitable to meet the SEN needs of the child. This must be reviewed annually by the LA.

## **7. Other related resources re children absent/missing from Education**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- ✓ Horton Lodge Attendance Policy
- ✓ Safeguarding (including child protection) Policy



- ✓ Child Sexual/Criminal Exploitation policy
- ✓ Children with Health Needs who cannot attend school policy
- ✓ Horton Lodge Attendance Policy
- ✓ Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- ✓ Children Missing in Education (September 2016)
- ✓ Children missing from education (Staffordshire County Council)

<b>Senior Leadership Team:</b>	Geraldine Fallows	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Chair of Governors' Management Committee:</b>	Jon Harris	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Jon Harris	<b>Date:</b>	