

Clewer Green CE First School

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Headteacher: Mr M Tinsley



'Inspiring Children'

Vision: Every child has been blessed by God with unique potential. Our vision for Clewer Green is to inspire and nurture children in a safe, happy and caring Christian community, where everyone is valued and enjoys learning.

'I can do all things through him who strengthens me'

Philippians 4:13

Safeguarding - Children Missing from Education Policy

THIS POLICY **MUST** BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH OUR **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY** and our **SAFEGUARDING – CHILD PROTECTION COVID-19 ADDENDUM**

(adapted from the RBWM LSCB Document)

The statutory guidance Children Missing Education (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). Local authorities should be able to demonstrate that they have considered this statutory guidance and, where it is not followed, the local authority should have reasonable grounds for not doing so.

- 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 education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life;
- Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Local authorities should focus their resources effectively in intervening early in the lives of vulnerable children to help prevent poor outcomes.

Statutory guidance for local authorities: Children missing education (January 2015).

Risks

These 'missing' children can be vulnerable; it is essential that all services work together to identify and re-engage these children back into appropriate education provision as quickly as possible. It is important to establish the reasons for the child being missing at the earliest possible stage.

- Possible reasons that should be considered include:
- Failure to start appropriate provision and never enter the system;
- Stopped attending, due to illegal exclusion or withdrawal by parent/carers;

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- Failure to complete a transition between schools;
- Children from refugee and asylum seeking families;
- Children from families who are highly mobile;
- Children at risk of a forced marriage;
- Children experiencing abuse and neglect.

Children who remain disengaged from education are potentially exposed to higher degrees of risk.

Children who go missing or run away from home or care may be in serious danger and are vulnerable to crime, sexual exploitation or abduction as well as missing education.

When families move between local authority areas it can sometimes lead to a child becoming 'lost' in the system and consequently missing education. Where a child has moved, local authorities should check with other local authorities – either regionally or nationally – and share information in order to ascertain where a child has moved. Once the location of the child is established, the relevant local authority must ensure that the child is receiving an education either by attending a school or the provision of electronic or distance learning packages where these are available.

Research has shown that many children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) families can become disengaged from education, particularly during the secondary school phase. It is therefore important that schools inform the local authority when a GRT pupil leaves the school without identifying a new destination school, particularly in the transition from primary to secondary so that they can attempt to facilitate continuity of the child's education. Although many are settled, some GRT families move regularly and their children can be at increased risk of missing education. Local authority Traveller Education Support Services (TESS), where these exist, or the named CME officer within the local authority, can advise schools on the best strategies for ensuring the minimum disruption to GRT pupils' education.

Families of members of the Armed Forces are likely to move frequently – both in the UK and overseas and often at short notice. Schools and local authorities should contact the MoD Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) for advice on making arrangements to ensure continuity of education for those children when the family moves.

Indicators

As a result of daily registration, Clewer Green CE Aided First School will be particularly well placed to notice when a child has gone missing. If a member of school staff becomes aware that a child may have run away or gone missing, they should try to establish with the parents / carers, what has happened.

If this is not possible, or the child is missing, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputies should, together with the class teacher, assess the child's vulnerability by making reasonable enquiries, and refer any concerns about the child to Children's Services.

Clewer Green CE Aided First School will monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. It is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the Local Authority.

In the more general circumstances of a child going missing who is not known to any other agencies, the Headteacher will inform the Pupil Tracking Officer and Education Welfare Officer of any child, who has not attended for 10 consecutive school days without provision of a reasonable explanation.

Clewer Green CE Aided First School has a safeguarding duty in respect of all of our pupils, and as part of this will investigate any unexplained absences. Further information about schools' safeguarding responsibilities can be found in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' the statutory guidance.

The school will notify the Local Authority within five days when a pupil's name is added to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The school will then provide the Local Authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil.

Likewise, Clewer Green CE Aided First School will notify the Local Authority when a pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register at a non-standard transition point under any of the fifteen grounds set out in the regulations, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

In line with the duty under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, the expectation is that Clewer Green CE Aided First School and the Local Authority will have in place procedures designed to carry out reasonable enquiries. The type of procedures may include the appropriate person checking with relatives, neighbours, landlords – private or social housing providers – and other local stakeholders who are involved. They should also record that they have completed these procedures. If there is reason to believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care (and the police if appropriate).

Protection and Action to be Taken

The Headteacher will inform the Pupil Tracking Officer and the child's social worker immediately a child subject to a Child Protection Plan is missing.

In the following circumstances a referral to Children's Services and /or the police should always be made promptly:

- The child may be the victim of a crime;
- The child is subject of a Child Protection Plan;
- The child is subject of Section 47 enquiries;
- The child is looked after;
- There is a known person posing a risk to children in the household or in contact with the household;
- There is a history of the family moving frequently;
- There are serious issues of attendance.

Where a child on the roll of Clewer Green CE Aided First School is missing, the child's name may not be removed from the school roll until s/he has been continuously absent for at least 4 weeks and both the school and the education service have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to locate the pupil and her/his family. After 4 weeks the child's Common Transfer file should be uploaded to the Department for Education secure site for the transfer of pupil information when a pupil moves between schools. The CME Officer in the Local Authority must also be informed.

In these circumstances the child's name is kept on a centrally held register, and should be clearly identified as missing from education.

Where the child's name has been removed from the school roll, but s/he has not been located, the Headteacher will arrange for the pupil's records to be retained until the child is located. They may be held centrally according to local arrangements.

Where the Headteacher has been notified by a parent that a pupil is receiving education other than at school, and has removed the child's name from the school roll, notification must be given to the

education service within 10 school days; the pupil's records will then be transferred to the education service to be stored in accordance with local arrangements.

If the school receives a new pupil without receiving information about the pupil from his or her previous school, the school should contact the Pupil Tracking Officer.

If the Pupil Tracking Officer of the Local Authority becomes aware the child has moved to another school s/he should ensure that all relevant agencies are informed and arrangements made to forward records from Clewer Green CE Aided First School.

Issues

A child missing from education is not in itself a child protection matter, and there may be an innocent explanation for this. However, regular school attendance is an important safeguard and unexplained non-attendance can be an early indicator of problems, risk and vulnerability.

Clewer Green CE Aided First School will endeavour to deal with this problem in three ways:

- By preventing poor school attendance and truancy;
- By acting once absence has occurred to establish children's safety and try to get them back to school;
- By taking action to trace children whose whereabouts are not known.

OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

- **Safeguarding - Anti-Bullying**
- **Safeguarding - Child Protection Policy**
- **Safeguarding – Children Missing in Education**
- **Safeguarding – E-safety**
- **Safeguarding – Peer on Peer Abuse**
- **Safeguarding – Positive Relationships and Behaviour**
- **Safeguarding – Code of Conduct**
- **Safeguarding – Safer Recruitment Policy**
- **Health and Safety Policy**

Revised: September 2021

Review Date: September 2022

Sarah Langley, Chair of Governors