



GATEHOUSE SCHOOL

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION POLICY

Updated in line with the DfE's Working Together to Improve School Attendance, Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework Children missing education	September 2024 September 2025 September 2025
Last Review	Autumn Term 2025
Next Review	Autumn Term 2026

Admissions Register / First Attendance

The School will enter all pupils' details on the electronic Admissions Register by the first day that the pupil is registered to attend the School. This will include contact details for at least two emergency contacts. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date the School will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the Local Authority at the earliest opportunity. **In line with KCSiE 2025, the School will also ensure that any child not attending is considered for potential safeguarding concerns and that the local authority is informed promptly if a pupil may be missing education.**

Attendance Register

The School will record and monitor the attendance of all pupils through "taking a register" for each form at the start of both the morning and afternoon school sessions. The Local Authority will be notified in cases where:

- a pupil is absent from school, without authorised permission, for a period of 10 days or more
- a pupil has not returned to school after an authorised absence of ten consecutive days, except in exceptional circumstances where the school has been notified that a child is being educated elsewhere e.g. where a child is accompanying a parent on an overseas work placement and arrangements have been made to continue short term education whilst overseas or where the pupil is unable to attend school because of sickness or unavoidable cause.
- The School will monitor the overall attendance statistics for pupils and there may be circumstances where, if this falls below 85%, Safeguarding concerns apply and the DSL will be notified. The DSL and Headteacher will decide whether a referral to the Local Authority should be made. It is the responsibility of the DSL to regularly monitor attendance and to inform the Headteacher (as appropriate) should there be any concern relating to the attendance of a pupil.

The school closely monitors attendance, absence, suspensions, and exclusions. A child going missing and absent from education, whether prolonged or on repeat occasions, can be a vital warning sign of a wide range of safeguarding issues and is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation, and child criminal exploitation (county lines) or mental health problems.

In accordance with KCSiE 2025 and Children Missing Education 2025 guidance, the school treats prolonged or repeated absence as a potential safeguarding concern and ensures all absences are followed up in a timely manner.

In accordance with the DfE's Working together to improve school attendance, the school follows up on absences and addresses persistent absence as part of its safeguarding duty. Such an approach prevents the risk of these children becoming children missing education in the future. Staff address daily absence and persistent absence as soon as these problems emerge as part of **as part of the school's early help and intervention approach.**

Staff should remain vigilant to children already known to be vulnerable going missing from education — particularly those who are known to a Social Worker or are Looked After Children — as prolonged or unexplained absence may increase existing safeguarding risks within the family or wider community.

In addition, staff should be alert to a wide range of warning signs discussed in safeguarding training and refreshers, including indicators of:

- Children at risk of **travelling to conflict zones**
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**
- **Forced marriage**
- **Child criminal or sexual exploitation (CCE/CSE)**

- **Radicalisation and extremist influences**
- **Domestic abuse or honour-based abuse**
- **Neglect, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse**

Staff should follow the school's safeguarding procedures without delay, sharing any concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy as appropriate.

Children absent from education procedures at Gatehouse

The School has clear procedures in place for following up on unexplained absences and, where necessary, reporting to the Local Authority pupils who are absent from school for more than 10 school days (continuous). **The School will make reasonable enquiries in accordance with Children Missing Education 2025 to locate the child and assess risk.**

Unauthorised Absence Procedures (If a pupil's absence is not reported:)

- We will try to contact parents by phone by 9.30am
- If we cannot reach parents by phone we will email
- If we have no response to the email, we will send a text message asking the parent to contact the school
- If we have no response to the text, we will phone authorised contacts listed on the pupil contact form to advise them that the child is not in school and that we have not been notified of a reason.
- If we have no response from any contact by 12:00 midday, we will call MASH for advice Gatehouse School will follow any advice given by MASH, including visiting the home address.

Pupils who are unwell and absent:

- The school nurse will contact the parents of any absent pupil to ascertain the reason for absence if the pupil is unwell, if no explanation of the illness has been given.
- Once a pupil's whereabouts/reason for absence have been established, it is the responsibility of the School Receptionist, or their substitute, to complete the entry for the given period on the registration system. This is a matter of priority.
- Every child's attendance should be 95% or above. This is monitored by our Safeguarding Lead on a weekly basis.
- 95%-100% is the expected attendance level
- 90%-95% is an emerging cause for concern. The DSL will email the parent to alert them of our concerns..

- 85%-90% is a cause for concern. The DSL will call the parent to discuss our concerns.
- Below 85% is a serious cause for concern. Parents will be invited to attend a meeting.

For children under five, attendance is not legally required; however, parents are expected to notify the school of their child's absence by 9:00 am so that registers can be accurately updated and to ensure there are no safeguarding issues.

Escalation and Safeguarding

- **At Gatehouse, children who are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods or on repeat occasions will be referred to the DSL.**
- **In line with KCSiE 2025 and Children Missing Education 2025, prolonged or repeated absence may trigger a referral to the Local Authority as a potential safeguarding concern related to children missing education.**
- **Full procedures and responsibilities are detailed in the Children Absent from School Policy and Attendance Policy.**

Gatehouse School has a legal duty to inform the Local Authority.

All references to notifying the Local Authority and maintaining records now explicitly follow Children Missing Education 2025, including:

- Notification of pupils removed from the roll at non-standard transition points
- Notification within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admissions register at a non-standard transition point
- Maintaining accurate contact details, including at least two emergency contacts

In line with KCSiE 2025, it is the School's policy to hold a minimum of two emergency contact numbers for each pupil and to consider any prolonged absence as a potential safeguarding concern.

Notification to the Local Authority

- Gatehouse School is legally required to notify the Local Authority within **five days** of adding a pupil's name to the admissions register at a non-standard transition point.
- The notification must include all details contained in the admissions register for the pupil, specifically:
 - Full name and sex
 - Name and address of parent(s) with whom the pupil normally lives, and indication of which parents hold parental responsibility
 - Address of new or additional places of residence
 - In accordance with *KCSiE 2025*, the School's policy is to hold **at least two emergency contact telephone numbers** for each pupil, wherever possible, to ensure that contact can be made quickly in the event of an emergency.
 - Date of birth
 - Name and address of last school attended (if any)
 - Details of whether the pupil is a boarder or a day pupil
- Where Nursery Childcare Funding is being claimed for a 3 or 4-year-old, the school will also provide details for the child and parents to the Local Authority.

Sharing Information When a Pupil Leaves

- The school will notify the Local Authority when a pupil of compulsory school age leaves at a non-standard transition point (i.e., other than at the end of the Summer Term at the end of Year 6).
- Information provided will include:
 - Full name of the pupil
 - Full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives
 - Two telephone number wherever possible) of the parent(s)
 - Where applicable, the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil will be going to live and the expected start date

- Name of the pupil's destination school and anticipated start date (if known)
- Reason/grounds for leaving the school

Maintaining Records

- The School administration officer will take steps to ensure contact details in the electronic Admissions Register are **kept up to date**. We tell parents they must notify the school of any changes.
- When a pupil joins the school after age 5, the name of the previous school will be recorded.
- When a pupil leaves the school, the destination school, where known, will be recorded.

Unknown Whereabouts of a Child

- When a pupil does not return to school and their whereabouts are unknown, the school will:
 - Make initial reasonable enquiries.
 - Only after these steps, refer the case to the Local Authority using a **Missing Children referral form**.
 - Contact: LBTH CME Officer, Tower Hamlets Education Safeguarding Service, Saadia.Anwer@towerhamlets.gov.uk, 020 7364 3426 / 07562 431 817
- **Children missing education** are pupils of compulsory school age who are not registered at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise. They are at significant risk of underachieving, harm, exploitation, radicalisation, or becoming NEET (not in education, employment, or training).
- Reasonable enquiries may include, but are not limited to:
 - Contacting parents, relatives, and neighbours
 - Checking local databases within the Local Authority
 - Checking Key to Success or school2school (s2s) systems
 - Using local information sharing arrangements and other local databases (housing, admissions, health, police, Youth Justice Services, children's social care, HMRC)

- Contacting UKVI and/or Border Force
 - Contacting agencies known to be involved with the family
 - Checking with the original or potential new schools and Local Authorities
 - For children of Service Personnel, consulting the MoD Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS)
 - Conducting home visits following local guidance and risk assessment
- This list is **not exhaustive**. Each case is assessed individually, and additional enquiries may be necessary. Enquiries may not always locate the child but will guide next steps, such as contacting police, social care, or the Foreign and Commonwealth Office if the child may have travelled abroad.

Children at Particular Risk

- Staff should be aware that children may be missing from education due to **abuse or neglect**.
- Where suspected, the school will follow local child protection procedures as outlined in the school's **Safeguarding Policy**.

Excluded Pupils

- In the unlikely event a pupil is temporarily excluded for more than **5 days**, the school will make arrangements for the pupil to continue their education at home.