



Chigwell School

Mr D.A.P. King
Head

dking@chigwell-school.org

D: +44 (0)20 8501 5701

T: +44 (0)20 8501 5700

High Road, Chigwell, Essex IG7 6QF

www.chigwell-school.org

Staff champion	AEG
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Children Absent from Education Policy

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1. Introduction

This policy is applicable to all Pre Prep, Prep and Senior School pupils, including those in the EYFS. The policy has regard to the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Supervision and Missing Child Policy and the guidance and advice contained in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025) and Children Missing Education (September 2025).

If children are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, it is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. The School will follow the procedures laid down by Essex Local Authority should a pupil fail to attend school regularly or has been absent from school without the School's permission for a continuous period of ten school days or more.

The School will inform the Local Authority where a pupil's name is going to be deleted from the admission register on certain grounds. In summary, these are when a child has been taken out of school to be home educated; when a family has apparently moved away; when a child has been certified as medically unfit to attend; or when a child is in custody for more than four months; when a child has been permanently excluded.

Additionally, the School will inform the Local Authority of any pupil who is going to be added or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points in accordance with the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016 (as amended). This will assist the Local Authority to:

- I. fulfil its duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing from education; and
- II. follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse, neglect or radicalisation

The school is aware that it has a duty to provide information to the Local Authority for standard transitions if requested. Should a child leave with no known destination the school will report this to Essex Local Authority and also copy in the local authority where the child is normally resident.

When a pupil leaves the School, the School will contact the receiving school to ensure the child is registered at the school. If a Child Protection file has been created, the DSL will then forward the appropriate records to the receiving school. When a pupil leaves the School without clear indication of a receiving school, the School will contact the Essex Local Authority.

2. Monitoring Attendance

The School monitors attendance through daily registers. Each school day consists of 'two sessions', morning registration and the afternoon. Registers are also taken at the start of every lesson for Years 7 to 13 and if a teacher other than the class teacher is taking a KS2 class. For welfare, health and safety, pastoral and educational reasons, all pupils, including boarders and Sixth Formers are registered before the start of both sessions. Registration is a key element of the School's safeguarding arrangements.

Staff are alert to patterns of regular absence and will alert the DSL in line with other safeguarding concerns. In addition, wherever possible, the School will hold more than one emergency contact number of each person.

The Deputy Head and the Head of the Pre Prep and Prep review attendance regularly to spot patterns of high absenteeism and will, if necessary, take appropriate action, whether pastoral, disciplinary, parental or child protection.

3. Absences

The School expects to be notified by parents or legal guardians of all pupil absences either in advance of the day or at the start of the day they are absent. The School adopts strict procedures for following up on any unexplained absences, essentially to:

- ascertain the reason;
- ensure that proper safeguarding action is taken;
- identify whether the absence is approved or not; and
- identify the correct code to use in the register.

Any absences for which the reason remains unknown by the close of registration are followed up by school receptionists who will contact parents in the first instance or, if necessary, the child's emergency contacts. The School will always aim to ascertain the reason for absence on the first day of absence.

From the first day that a child does not attend School and there is no explanation or authorisation of the absence and/or the School is dissatisfied with the reason given for the absence, the following steps will be taken:

- The Head of Pre Prep and Prep or Deputy Head of the Senior School will contact the parents/carer to seek reassurance that the child is safe at home;
- The outcome of the contact will be assessed and if there are any concerns the DSL will be consulted to consider the child's vulnerability. A referral to children's social care will be made where there are any concerns that a child may be at risk of harm or suffering harm.

Prolonged or repeated absences, or particular patterns of absence or lateness (with no satisfactory explanation) are treated by the School as potential safeguarding issues and in these instances the School will follow the procedures laid down by the Essex Local Authority.

4. Missing Child Procedure

It is important to distinguish between a pupil's absence from school for an unknown reason and a pupil's disappearance from a lesson or activity after arrival at school. Both are considered as potential safeguarding matters. The procedures to follow if a child goes missing when in the care of the School are outlined in the School's Supervision and Missing Child Policy.

**For and on behalf of the Governors
D.A.P. King**

Appendix I - Essex Safeguarding Board 2025: 'Children Missing Education due to a Reduced Education Offer' Guidance for Schools

Attendance Compliance Team; Attendancecompliance@essex.gov.uk

Tel: 0333 032 2988

CME / EHE

Email: cme@essex.gov.uk

Tel: 03330 322 962

Licensing

Email: child.employment@essex.gov.uk

Reduced Timetable

Email: provision@essex.gov.uk

Contacting the Quadrant teams

West: westattendancespecialistteam@essex.gov.uk

Reduced timetable

- On occasions a school, in agreement with the parent / carer of a pupil may put in place a reduced education offer by limiting the lessons a pupil is expected to attend.
- Schools should have an action plan in place to consider increasing the young person's timetable and this should be regularly reviewed.
- Guidance to schools on reducing a young person's timetable can be found on the Essex School Infolink: [Reduced timetable guidance](#)
- Education Access can support

Unauthorised lateness

- Late arrival to school affects not only the pupil who is late but disrupts the whole class.
- Schools should be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.
- Where a pupil arrives after the registers close the U code should be entered.
- The U code is treated as an unauthorised absence for the whole session, so prosecution could be considered
- Further information can be obtained from the quadrant based attendance specialist re whole school approach or the attendance compliance team for prosecution.

Internal Truancy

- Sometimes pupils will register at school but then not attend lessons or leave the school site.
- Schools should have in place procedures to identify when children are not in lessons and their response to this. This should include notifying parents / carers and or police that the pupil is missing.
- Quadrant teams may be able to advise

Reduced timetable

- On occasions a school, in agreement with the parent / carer of a pupil may put in place a reduced education offer by limiting the lessons a pupil is expected to attend.
- Schools should have an action plan in place to consider increasing the young person's timetable and this should be regularly reviewed.

Irregular school Attendance

- Attendance below 90% is considered persistent absence.
- Schools should investigate reasons for the poor attendance and consider whether legal action is appropriate.

- The quadrant-based Attendance Specialists will offer advice and guidance to schools on best practice
- The Attendance Compliance team can advise for prosecution.

Children Who Are Absent From School And Their Whereabouts Are Unknown

- Schools are required to inform the LA (The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations, 2006) of any pupils who have been absent from school for 10 continuous school days and where they have been unable to make contact with the parent/carer to establish the reason for the absence.
- In Essex schools are required to notify the LA via the [Missing Pupil Checklist](#)
- The CME team will carry out checks

Elective Home Education

- Parents have the right to make the decision to home educate their child.
- Where a parent decides that they wish to remove their child from a school roll to educate them at home, they must write to the school to notify them of this decision and, upon receipt of this written notification, the school should remove the pupil from roll.
- Schools must report any removal from roll to the local authority and are required to share any concerns that they hold in relation to the child being home educated.
- Where concerns are raised, the Education Access CME / EHE Team will carry out investigations to determine whether or not the child is in receipt of a suitable education.
- Full details can be found on the Essex Schools Infolink: [EHE guidance](#)

Contacting the teams

Quadrants

Mid: midattendancespecialistteam@essex.gov.uk

Northeast: neattendancespecialistteam@essex.gov.uk

South: southattendancespecialistteam@essex.gov.uk

West: westattendancespecialistteam@essex.gov.uk

Tel: 0333 032 2968

Attendance Compliance Team:

Email: Attendancecompliance@essex.gov.uk

Tel: 0333 032 2988

CME / EHE

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