



ABLE Education Policy Document

ATTENDANCE POLICY

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1. Introduction

At ABLE Education, we recognise the importance of regular attendance in ensuring students achieve their full potential. This policy outlines our approach to promoting high attendance, managing absences, and supporting students in maintaining regular attendance and should be read in conjunction with ABLE Education's Child Protection & Safeguarding and Behaviour policies.

2. Aims and objectives

- To promote a culture of high attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure all students have access to a full educational experience.
- To identify and address barriers to attendance at an early stage.
- To comply with legal and statutory requirements regarding school attendance.

3. Roles and responsibilities

- **Students:** are expected to attend regularly and arrive on time.
- **Parents/carers:** are responsible for ensuring their child attends and informing the provision of any absences. Parents/carers must inform the provision before the beginning the session that the student will be absent from, stating the reason.
- **Tutors:** are responsible for recording attendance accurately and promptly as well as supporting students in improving attendance.
- **Senior Leadership:** oversees attendance procedures and interventions. The Head of Provision will send attendance records to the commissioner each half term. They will also report any absences to the commissioner on a daily basis.

4. Attendance expectations

- Students are expected to attend every timetabled session unless they have a valid reason for absence.
- Attendance below 90% will be considered as persistent absence and will trigger intervention.
- Punctuality is expected, and lateness will be monitored and addressed.

5. Registration

ABLE Education uses a secure Excel template to keep up-to-date records of all our students' attendance. Tutors record attendance at the beginning of each session using the following codes:

"/" to mark the student as present during an AM session.

"\" to mark the student as present during an PM session.

"L" to indicate a student arrived late. A student is classed as late up to 10 minutes after the close of register. Notes will be made regarding the student's lateness by the tutor.

"A" to denote an authorised absence.

ABLE Education will track and monitor attendance daily to ensure registers are completed and any absence is followed up. Registers will be reviewed on a weekly basis.

6. Communicating with the commissioning body

Attendance will be recorded on a pass-worded file located virtually that the commissioner is able to access in real-time and see updates as they are made. Any absences will be communicated with the commissioner with the reason, if one has been communicated by the parent/carer. The commissioner can then authorise the absence if they choose to do so.

7. Holidays during term time

If we receive information that a student has or is considering taking a holiday during term time, the home school will be notified so they can assess the situation and decide upon what action to take. Creating a consistent dialogue with the commissioning school will allow us to work together towards solutions that are in the best interests of the student.

8. Learners who abscond

ABLE Education will take all reasonable steps to prevent children and young people from absconding. However, if a child/young person is absent without consent or has absconded, the primary objective is to **locate and return the child/young person to a safe environment**.

If a pupil absconds from their session, tutors should **contact their parents/carers immediately** to inform them of what has happened. The DSL/Head of Provision should also be contacted so that they can **pass the information onto the commissioner** and possibly the police and social care depending upon child's vulnerabilities. A note should be added to the register and to the session report detailing the time the learner absconded and any other information relevant to them leaving the setting.

When learners return after an episode of absconding, a reparative meeting will be held with the student, the DSL and/or the tutor. During this session, the reasons for absconding will be explored and the consequences discussed.

9. Tracking attendance in line with DfE guidance including CME regulations

If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed date, the provision will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and will notify the commissioner at the earliest opportunity.

ABLE will monitor pupils' attendance through our daily attendance register. We will agree with the commissioner the intervals at which we will make a return to them (an 'attendance return'^{18'}) with the details of any pupil who has failed to attend regularly (excluding where they were attending an approved educational activity covered by codes D, K, V or B), or has been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence had been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O and/or U). We will monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. It is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the commissioner so that they can address this with their attendance officers.

Recording information on the learner's file

It is important that the learner's file is accurate and kept up-to-date. ABLE will encourage parents to inform them of any changes whenever they occur, which will assist both the school and local authority when making enquiries to locate children missing education.

Where a parent/carer notifies us that a pupil will normally live at another address, whether in addition to or instead of their current address, we will record on the learner's file:

- the address;
- the full name of each parent the pupil will normally live with; and
- the date when the pupil will start normally living there.

Where the provision becomes aware that the pupil is or will be attending a different setting (in addition to or instead of ABLE Education's provision), we will record on the learner's file:

- the name of the other setting; and
- the date when the pupil began or will begin attending the school.

Reference will be made to the CME guidance, children missing education- statutory guidance for Local Authorities Sep 2016, where concerns are raised regarding:

- Leave of Absence – Failure to return
- Request to Elective Home Educate
- Moved out of Area – Destination Known
- Moved out of Area – Destination Unknown
- Young person leaving site
- Young person leaves/absent re Appointment

All staff are required to familiarise themselves with the attendance recording and reporting processes outlined in this document so that they are clear with how to proceed in any situation involving learners for which attendance has presented as an issue. This includes learners leaving site/absconding/unauthorised absence.

10. When a child is suspected to be missing education

If a child is suspected to be missing in education, this will be responded to **immediately** by **contacting** both the **commissioner and the parents/carers** of the child.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff members should discuss with parents/carers the reason for the child missing from education. It is important to remember that repeat episodes of a child going missing can indicate child criminal and/or child sexual exploitation and should not be viewed as a normal pattern of behaviour. We will investigate any unexplained absences to help identify the risk

of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

If there are concerns with a child missing from education, the **DSL must be informed** to make a decision on the next step as appropriate for the young person in question.

Within the first 10 school days, the provision will make and record all attempts to locate the child by:

- Contacting emergency family numbers or email
- Letters and/or visits to home address
- Checking with other agencies working with the child
- Checking with any agencies that work with the child
- Liaising with the academy/school linked to the child

If the child has changed school, confirm attendance at the new school. Once confirmed, the pupil can be removed from ABLE's attendance register.

If the child is believed to have moved and whereabouts are unknown, a CME referral will be completed online at https://myaccount.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/service/children_missing_education_referral.

The CME officer will:

- Send an email receipt confirming the referral has been received
- Open an enquiry for the child, including local/national/international enquiries
- Do not remove a child from the school roll during this investigation stage

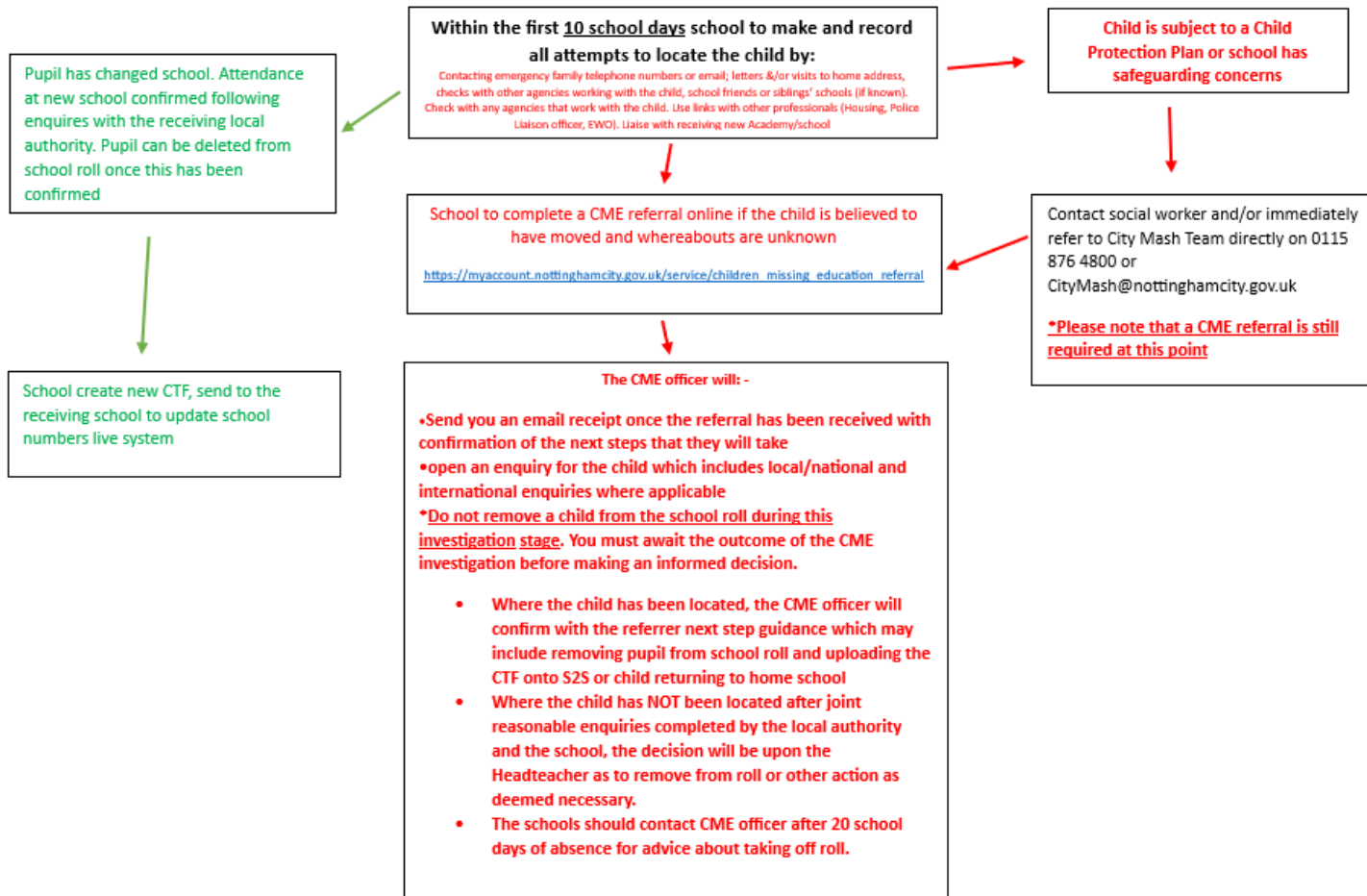
If the child has been located, the CME officer will confirm next steps, which may include removing the pupil from the school roll.

If the child has not been located after 20 school days of absence, the school should contact the CME officer for further action.

If the child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or has safeguarding concerns, the DSL will contact the social worker or City Mash Team immediately at CityMash@Nottinghamcity.gov.uk or call 0115 876 4800.

The full procedure for if a child is suspected to be missing education can be found in the flowchart below.

NCC Children Missing Education (CME) Process



Only when written confirmation is received from the CME Officer can the child be removed from the school roll and included as a deletion from school. The school creates CTF using XXXX XXXX as the destination code and uploads the file to the S2S system where it will then be stored in 'the lost pupil database'. When a pupil moves to a non-maintained school or one outside England and Wales then MMMMMM should be used as the destination code. This enables the CTF to be stored securely and to be available if the pupil returns to a maintained school- exceptions are non-maintained special schools, service children's schools or other schools which can be identified via Getting Information about Schools (GIAS)

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11. Induction procedure

If attendance concerns are identified upon admission or through the induction process, then these will be highlighted with parents/carers and appropriate procedure followed i.e., parenting contracts etc. During the student induction, parents and students will be provided with the lesson timetable and the lessons/qualifications available will be explained.

12. Punctuality

The provision sets high expectations around punctuality as it is viewed as an important life skill for our students. However, the provision recognises that for some of our students, sensitivity and an individual approach needs to be taken to support them to develop this skill. ABLE Education will develop appropriate interventions for individual students to improve and reward their punctuality.

13. Monitoring and intervention

- Attendance will be monitored daily, and concerns will be addressed promptly.
- Students with attendance below 90% over the course of a term will be contacted for support and intervention.
- Strategies may include meetings with parents, attendance contracts, and external support referrals.

14. Persistent absence

The DfE defines persistent absentees as school-age pupils missing more than 10% of sessions in a school year. There is no set number of days allowed for absence. Other than in exceptional circumstances, all pupils must attend all school sessions while they are of compulsory school age. Parents are guilty of an offence if their child fails to attend regularly: the duty for parents to ensure their child receives a suitable "efficient full-time education" is set out in Section 7 of the Education Act (1996).¹

It is our duty as a provision to report our persistent absence figures to the commissioning school. In line with government legislation, any pupil whose attendance falls below 90% is classed as persistently absent. We will endeavour to work with all pupils who are persistently absent to develop strategies to improve their attendance. Parents/carers of persistent absentees will be invited to discuss their child's attendance with ABLE Education's Head of Provision.

If a child misses 2 consecutive days, a letter will be sent home if there is no valid reason for the absence. If there is no immediate improvement, further procedures will be taken such as attendance meetings with the family and student, and possibly the commissioning school's attendance team. Working closely with the student's home school will be vital to work towards a solution that all parties can agree on.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>

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If attendance does not improve after these measures have been taken, referrals to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will be made. We will send evidence of the persistent absence along with the referral and parents will be informed by letter of what action we are taking.

15. Remote learning

If a child is unable to attend the provision for a specified period but can take part in remote learning, we will make every effort to arrange this with the pupil and their parents/carers.