



Hayes School
(Part of the Impact Multi Academy Trust)

Policy Document

Policy Name:	Attendance and Punctuality
Date of Last Review:	Spring 2023
Date of Next Review:	Spring 2024
SLT Responsible:	Principal, Assistant Principal (Attendance)



IMPACT Multi Academy Trust

A company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales with number 07697400

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1. Introduction/Aim

Hayes School aims to ensure all students are able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and we firmly believe excellent attendance and punctuality play a crucial part in helping our students reach their full academic potential and expand their future life choices. Hayes School seeks to ensure that every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.

All of our staff are committed to supporting parents and carers, so that every student is able to secure the highest possible levels of attendance. We encourage every student to strive for regular attendance in a school year. This is achieved by providing an outstanding and nurturing learning environment that allows any issues preventing full attendance to be identified and acted on promptly.

The Children Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the welfare of children and to share information appropriately. We will work in partnership with other agencies and professionals to ensure our students are safe and that they are participating in education. Our Attendance and Punctuality Policy applies to all students registered at Hayes School and is therefore shared with parents/carers and students on admission to the school. It should not be viewed in isolation; it is supported by the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Children with Health Needs who cannot attend School

2. Legislation

2.1 Section 7 of the Education Act 1996

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him or her to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

2.2 Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996

Section 444(1) of the **Education Act 1996** states: If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence.

Failure to secure regular attendance at school may result in the parent being prosecuted in the Magistrates Court or issued with a Penalty Notice.

A Penalty Notice is a fine of £120 per parent per child payable within 28 days (reducing to £60 if paid within 21 days). The London Borough of Bromley will consider taking legal action if a Penalty Notice remains unpaid after 28 days of the date of issue. Legal action may result in a fine of up to £1,000 and a criminal record for each parent.

Under education law, "parent" has a wider definition than under The Children Act and is defined as follows:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and, any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.
- A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term commencing on or after their 5th birthday until the last Friday in June of the academic year in which they reach the age of 16.
- The Court has determined that "regular" attendance means that which is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school" (*Isle of Wight Council -v- Platt (6th April 2017) [Supreme Court] [2017] UKSC 28 (on appeal from [2016] EWHC 1283 (Admin))*). This means attendance is required at every session the school is open to students, unless their absence has been authorised by the school.

2.3 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by 2016 regulations, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the student was:

- Present
- Present at approved educational activity
- Absent, or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Hayes School aims to create an inclusive, nurturing and welcoming ethos in which students feel valued and are stimulated to grow in self-esteem and experience success. Improving school attendance is a responsibility shared by the governors, trustees, school staff, parents/carers and students.

3.1 The Governors

The Governors will:

- Promote the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Annually review the school's Attendance and Punctuality Policy and ensure resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Ensure relevant legislation is complied with
- Agree school attendance targets
- Monitor the school's attendance through termly reporting at meetings of Governors.

3.2 Our Staff

Our staff will:

- Provide a welcoming, safe and high quality learning environment for all students
- Encourage excellent attendance and punctuality through outstanding teaching and learning experiences that supports all students to attend and achieve their full potential
- Nurture positive relationships with students and their parents/carers
- Set school attendance targets
- Monitor each student's attendance and follow agreed school attendance management procedures
- Consult with parents/carers regarding their child's attendance and welfare

- Work in partnership with parents/carers to resolve any difficulties relating to their child's attendance
- Use appropriate interventions to support students and parents/carers to improve attendance
- Comply with current legislation and regulations when recording the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner
- Refer irregular school attendance to the school's education welfare service provider
- Refer irregular school attendance to the London Borough of Bromley for a Penalty Notice to be issued or for consideration of prosecution.

3.3 Parents and Carers

We expect parents and carers will:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and on time
- Promote the value of a good education and excellent school attendance within the home environment and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure any child in their care arrives at school appropriately prepared for the day (including extra-curricular activities) and having completed any homework they have been given
- Contact the school on their child's first day of absence, and on each subsequent day, to notify the reason for the absence and the expected date of their child's return to school
- Provide medical or other documentary evidence to support their child's absence, when this has been requested
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making all non-urgent medical and dental appointments outside of school hours
- Follow the school procedure if it becomes necessary to request a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances
- Notify the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance or welfare
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of school or home life
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss their child's attendance and welfare
- Inform the school of any change of address and/or telephone number
- Abide by the school's Attendance and Punctuality Policy

3.4 Students

We expect students will:

- Attend school regularly
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- Speak to their form tutor, Achievement Co-ordinator/ or another member of staff, if they are experiencing any difficulties at school or at home
- Comply with school procedures if they arrive late or leave early (signing in/out, as appropriate)

4. Attendance Procedures

4.1 Expected absence procedure for parents:

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly, however, if a child is unavoidably absent from school then parents/carers are expected to:

- Telephone the school office (020 8462 2767- Option 1) before 8.00am on the first day of absence, and on each subsequent day, to report the reason for the absence and the expected date of their child's return to school

- When requested, provide medical evidence or other appropriate documentation that supports the level of absence. Examples of medical evidence include a dated medical appointment card, a photocopy of a signed and dated prescription, labelled medication packaging, a note or computer printout from a GP/Hospital confirming your child has been seen, together with the reason
- Upon the child's return to school, provide a written note confirming the reason for the absence
- Provide an appointment letter or card to support any hospital or clinic appointment that takes place during school hours
- If a student is absent and there has been no contact from the parent or carer, the school's Attendance Protocol will be instigated

4.2 Attendance Protocol

Where a student is absent without explanation, the school will respond as follows:

- The absence procedure will be activated for all students who are not in school by the close of the register and parents/carers will receive a SMS and / or email
- If there is no response following the absence procedure, the school may contact the student's named emergency contacts
- A home visit may be carried out where school has not been able to contact the student's parent/carer or named emergency contacts, especially in the event of prolonged absence from school.
- If any student leaves the school site without permission, school will contact the parents/carers and take appropriate action to ensure the student's safety and welfare.

In certain circumstances the school may also:

- Carry out a safeguarding home visit, or contact the police and/or social services where there are concerns for the immediate safety and welfare of the student
- Write to the parents/carers to highlight attendance or punctuality concerns
- Require parents/carers to provide medical evidence, or other documentation, to support the level of absence
- Invite parents/carers to a meeting to discuss how the school can support improved attendance
- Refer to an external agency to offer support, guidance and advice
- Refer parents/carers to the school's education welfare service provider for formal intervention to improve attendance
- Refer to the London Borough of Bromley for a penalty notice or for consideration of prosecuting parents/carers for failing to ensure their child's regular school attendance

4.3 Late Arrival in School

The register for morning registration opens at 8:30am and closes at 9:30am and the register for afternoon registration opens at 12:55pm and closes at 3:00pm.

We expect all students to arrive in school on time every day that the school is open. The school day begins promptly and we advise parents/carers to ensure their child is on the school site by 8.30am. Any student arriving after 8.30am will be marked in as late and will be required to report to Student Reception or the Sixth Form Office where they will be expected to report the reason for their late arrival. Unless there is an exceptional reason for their late arrival, students in Years 7-11 will be given a detention:

- Late (arrives before 9.30am) – Senior Leadership Late Detention at lunch on same day for 15 mins
- Late (after 9.30am) – Principal's Detention on Saturday for 2 hours

- 2 or more lates in a week for any student in years 7-13 results in a Senior Leader Detention after school on a Friday for 1 hour.
- If a student arrives to school late but fails to sign in at Student Reception then they will receive a Middle Leadership Detention for after school the following day.

Any student arriving after the AM register has been taken will receive a late mark (L code - late before the close of register). Any student arriving on or after the AM register has closed will be marked as absent for the entire morning session (U code - late after the close of register). This is classed as an "unauthorised absence".

Parents/carers will be contacted regarding patterns of late arrival. Repeated late arrival after the close of registration may result in a referral being made to the London Borough of Bromley for consideration of prosecution or for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

A Penalty Notice is a fine of £120 per parent per child payable within 28 days (reducing to £60 if paid within 21 days). The London Borough of Bromley will consider taking legal action if a Penalty Notice remains unpaid after 28 days of the date of issue. Legal action may result in a fine of up to £1,000 and a criminal record for each parent.

4.4 Support Systems

We monitor the attendance of all of our students on a daily basis for safeguarding. Attendance is reviewed by the school on a fortnightly basis along with the Education Welfare Service and where concerns are identified, we will work with the student and their parents/carers to explore the reasons for the absences and to try and resolve any difficulties. Lateness is reviewed on a half termly basis.

We recognise that some students are more likely to require additional support to achieve good attendance. We also recognise that irregular attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a child's life and this may be related to problems at home or in school. Our aim is to work in partnership with families by offering support that is child focused and planned in discussion and agreement with parents/carers.

Parents/carers are encouraged to inform the school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, significant health issues, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school to identify any additional support that may be needed in school. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

We will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance, which may include:

- Discussions with students and parents/carers
- Form Tutor support
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Mentor support
- Reintegration support packages
- School nurse intervention
- Reward and recognition schemes
- Parenting contracts
- Engaging the support of other agencies
- Referral to the school's education welfare service provider
- Referral to the London Borough of Bromley for legal intervention

4.5 Threshold for formal intervention

When a student's attendance falls below 96% the school will write to the parent/carer notifying them that there is a concern their child is missing a significant part of learning. The parent/carer will be asked to contact the school if they are aware of any issues that may be impacting on their child's ability to attend school regularly.

Should attendance remain a concern, a further letter will be sent notifying the parent/carer that medical evidence will be required in order that any future absences from illness or appointments are authorised. Examples of when the school may require a parent/carer to provide medical evidence are as follows:

- Attendance was below 90% at the end of the previous academic year (Persistent Absentee)
- Attendance is currently below 96%
- Three separate periods of illness in a six week period
- Absences have occurred immediately before or after a school holiday.
- A pattern of absence has been identified on a specific day
- On the third consecutive day of absence if attendance is below 96%

If a parent/carer fails or refuses to work with the school and attendance remains a concern, a referral will be made to the school's education welfare service provider, who will offer further support and guidance but may also initiate a referral to the London Borough of Bromley for consideration of legal sanctions, which may be in the form of a Penalty Notice or prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

In accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1996, parents found guilty in a Magistrates Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school will receive a criminal record and a fine of up to £1000 for an offence under a Section 444 (1) or a fine of up to £2500 or a maximum of 3 months imprisonment for an offence under Section 444 (1a).

4.6 Children with a Social Worker

Where children have an allocated social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

Our Attendance Officer is aware of those students who have a social worker.

4.7 Attendance Awards

The school operates a number of awards and incentives for excellent attendance. Each term, certificates are presented to students who have achieved 100% attendance. Significant attendance improvement is also recognised and will be acknowledged with students and parents/carers.

5. Leave of Absence

5.1 Legislation

Amendments made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into effect in September 2013 and prohibit a Head Teacher from granting any leave of absence unless in "exceptional circumstances." This includes holiday taken during term time.

Any leave of absence granted due to “exceptional circumstances” is done so entirely at the Principal’s discretion who will determine the number of days your child can be absent. The regulations do not allow for retrospective approval to be given and therefore a written application must be made to the Principal in advance of the leave being taken.

Should a leave of absence be taken without obtaining the prior permission of the Principal or your child is kept away for longer than was approved, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the matter may be referred to the London Borough of Bromley for consideration of prosecution or a Penalty Notice may be issued.

Leave of absence will not be granted and absences will not be authorised for:

- Looking after family members (except in exceptional circumstances)
- Birthdays or other similar events
- Any work (paid or unpaid) undertaken during school hours
- Family holidays during term time

5.2 Requesting a Leave of Absence

Parents/carers who need to request an absence for their child during term time should complete a leave of absence form. This must, wherever possible, be submitted to the Principal at least 2 weeks prior to the leave date. Each request will be considered separately and any decision to grant a leave of absence is done so entirely at the discretion of the Principal.

The dates of the school holidays are published a year in advance and can be obtained from the school office or via the school’s website. Family holidays are not considered to be “exceptional circumstances” and will not be authorised.

6. Deletions from the Register

A student can lawfully be removed from the school’s roll when it has been established that one of the specified criteria set out under Section 8 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, has been met.

6.1 Moving School

When parents/carers decide to send their child to a different school, it is important they inform the school as soon as possible. The student will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the student will leave the school
- The name and address of the student’s new school
- The student’s new home address (if applicable)

An in-year transfer form can be obtained from the London Borough of Bromley and should be completed by the parent/carer and the Principal.

6.2 Children Missing from Education

All professionals working with children have a responsibility to ensure a child’s wellbeing and to remain vigilant to their safety and welfare both inside and outside of school. When a student is absent from school for 10 consecutive days and their whereabouts are unknown, the school will follow the London Borough of Bromley’s protocol for children missing from education (CME procedures). This will involve carrying out joint enquiries with the London Borough of Bromley to establish the current whereabouts of the child.

6.3 Elective Home Education

If a parent/carer wishes to Electively Home Educate (EHE) their child, the school will deregister the child at the point written notification is received from the parent/carer expressing their intention to do so and upon the school having notified the London Borough of Bromley.

7. Attendance Monitoring

7.1 Monitoring Attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school at an individual student level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Student-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing body.

7.2 Analysing Attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors, Achievement Coordinators and other school leaders to facilitate discussions with students and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of students who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school. This may either be with or in conjunction with our Education Welfare Service provider.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. Legal Framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- Working Together to Improve School Attendance, Department for Education (May 2022)
- Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance (May 2022)

- School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures: Statutory Guidance, Department for Education (January 2017)
- London Borough of Bromley's "Children Missing Education" procedure
- London Borough of Bromley's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, Department for Education (September 2018)
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Children Act 2004
- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- Section 444 (1) and Section 444 (1A) of the Education Act 1996
- Section 8 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended

APPENDIX A: Definitions

9. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

9.1 Parent

Under education law, "parent" has a wider interpretation than under The Children Act 1989 and is defined as follows:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person as defined by the Children Act 1989
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child

9.2 Compulsory School Age

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday and ceases to be so on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

9.3 Regular Attendance

The Court has determined that "regular" attendance means that which is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school" (*Isle of Wight Council -v- Platt* (6th April 2017) [Supreme Court] [2017] UKSC 28 (on appeal from [2016] EWHC 1283 (Admin)). This means attendance is required at every session the school is open to students, unless their absence has been authorised by the school.

9.4 Absence

- Not attending school for any reason
- Arriving at school after the register has closed

9.5 Authorised Absence

The school has either given approval in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence. Examples of authorised absence:

- An absence due to illness or significant injury
- Urgent medical or dental appointments
- Religious observance
- Exceptional circumstances or unavoidable cause
- Formal exclusion from school

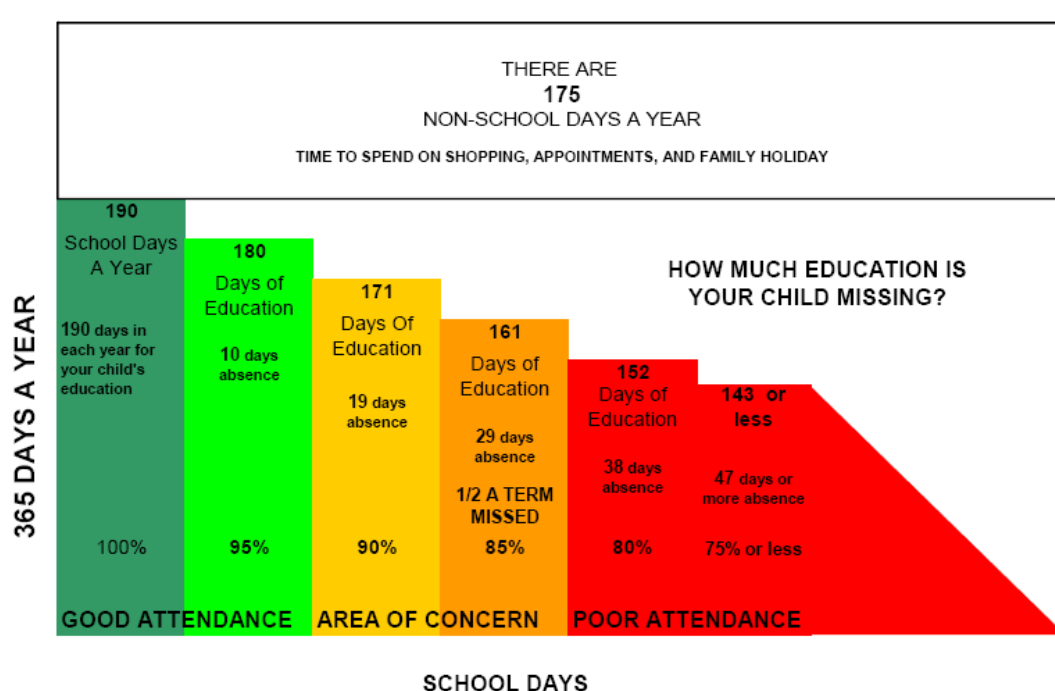
9.6 Unauthorised Absence

The school has not been provided with an explanation for the student's absence or is not satisfied with the reasons given. Examples of unauthorised absence:

- Absences that have not been properly explained
- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy, or an unwillingness to attend school
- Shopping, birthdays or looking after other children
- Holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Illness where medical evidence has been requested but not provided
- Arrival at school after the register has closed

9.7 Persistent Absenteeism (PA) or Severe Absenteeism (SA):

A student is classed as a "persistent absentee" when their attendance falls to 90% or below for any reason. Over the course of an academic year this equates to 38 missed sessions (19 school days). A student is classed as a "severe absentee" when their attendance falls to 50% or below for any reason. Over the course of an academic year this equates to 195 missed sessions (97.5 school days).



APPENDIX B: Children Missing Education Procedure

1. Introduction

This should be read in accordance with our Attendance and Punctuality Policy and Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy. The law states every child should be receiving education. All professionals working with children have a responsibility to ensure a child's wellbeing and to remain vigilant to their safety and welfare both inside and outside school. Children missing from education can be especially vulnerable.

2. Definition

The Department for Education defines Children Missing Education as:

- 'all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. privately or in an alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually four weeks or more)'

This definition is adopted in this Children Missing Education Procedure.

3. Working Together

The Children Act 2004 places a duty on all agencies to work together to promote the welfare of children and to share information appropriately. Schools within Impact Multi Academy Trust will work with other agencies and professionals to ensure that our children and young people are participating in education.

4. Children at Risk

There are certain points at which children are most at risk of becoming missing from education, and the most common reasons for this include:

- Children not registered by parents/carers at school when they achieve statutory school age
- Children not registered at school for the start of high school (Year 7)
- Frequent house moves, periods of homelessness or time spent in refuges
- Family breakdown
- Parents/carers "withdrawing" children from school
- Schools off-rolling students without the correct checks and procedures being followed
- Exclusion (official and unofficial)
- Children being "home educated" but not officially recognised as such.

Certain groups of children are more likely to be affected by the factors listed above and include:

- Children in Public Care (Looked After Children)
- Children who have been the subject of a Child Protection Plan.
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Gypsy, Roma and Travelling families
- Children who have experienced domestic violence or other adverse family circumstances
- Children with special educational needs
- Migrant families
- Children who have had attendance difficulties

The cost to children missing out on education can be very high – to themselves, their families and society as a whole. Children who do not engage in education are unlikely to gain any formal qualifications, and a fragmented educational history can result in low levels of functional literacy and numeracy in adult life.

Missing out on learning may also be linked to other problems in later life including:

- Unemployment
- Homelessness
- Criminal and anti-social behaviour
- Involvement in prostitution and the sex trade
- Substance abuse

- Teenage parenthood
- Mental health and self-esteem issues
- Physical health issues (including those linked to poverty)
- Forced marriage

5. Responsibilities

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities in England and Wales to make arrangements to identify children and young people of compulsory school age missing education in their area. There is a Children Missing Education (CME) named point of contact in every Local Authority.

Every practitioner working with a child has a responsibility to inform their CME contact if they know or suspect that a child is not receiving education.

5.1 The Duty of the Local Authority

Local authorities have a duty under s436A of the Education Act 1996 to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in our area who are of compulsory school age but who are not registered students at a school or receiving some other form of suitable education. Bromley Local Authority therefore must identify all children within the area and ensure that they are either registered students at a maintained, non-maintained or independent school, or that they are receiving another form of suitable education. Part of this duty therefore requires them to have details of those students registered at all schools who are ordinarily resident within Bromley.

5.2 The Role of the School

5.2.1 Children joining the School

When a child is expected to join school and does not arrive, we will initially try to contact the parents/carers by telephone or letter to find out why. If, after one week this has not been successful, the school will contact the Admissions Department at London Borough of Bromley to establish if the child has been registered elsewhere.

If the child is not found to be on roll elsewhere, the school will report this to the Education Welfare Officer and Local Authority Children Missing Education (CME) Officer.

After four school weeks (28 days) if the child has not attended the child will be removed from roll.

5.2.2 Children absent from school for a prolonged period of time

If a child is absent from school for a prolonged period, or fails to return from an agreed holiday, the school will follow normal procedures for investigating the absence. If this is not successful, a referral to the Education Welfare Officer will be made.

If a child is absent from school because they are believed to have moved away, and parents and emergency contacts cannot be reached, the school will make a referral to Education Welfare Officer.

When the Education Welfare Officer has investigated, but not located the child, the school will report the child to the CME officer at the Local Authority.

If there is a concern regarding the immediate safety of the child a referral to Social Care will be made. Dependent on the level of concern, the Local Authority Designated Officer can also be consulted via the Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP).

It is the decision of the Principal as to when to remove a child from roll; however, deletions from a school roll can usually be made after four school weeks (28 days) continuous absence where all reasonable attempts have been made to trace a child and the CME officer has been notified.